

The NATURALISTS' CLUB Newsletter

2009

OCTOBER – DECEMBER

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

OCTOBER

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|-----------------|--|
| 2-4 Fri.-Sunday | The Naturalists' Club 40th Anniversary Weekend, <i>Russell</i> |
| 17 Saturday | Alander Mt. Trail, <i>Mount Washington</i> |
| 18 Sunday | Turtle Bend Mountain, <i>Russell</i> |
| 18 Sunday | Astronomy Walk Series: Saturn and Its Many Moons, <i>Easthampton</i> |
| 21 Wednesday | October Meeting: A Brief Natural History of the Connecticut River Valley Landscape, from the Big Bang to the Present |
| 22 Thursday | A Fall Walk, <i>Agawam</i> |
| 24 Saturday | Walk at Laughing Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, <i>Hampden</i> |
| 24 Saturday | Ocean Kayaking at Cohasset Harbor and Minot's Ledge Light, <i>Cohasset</i> |
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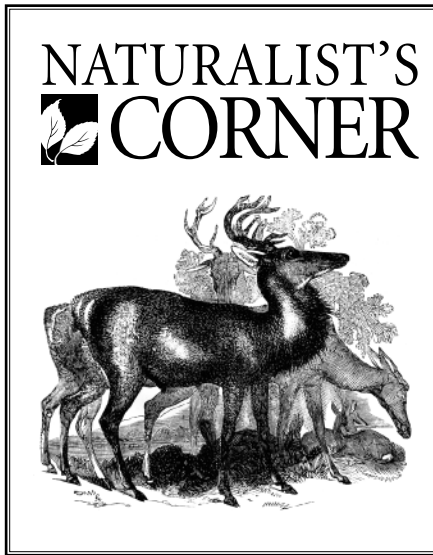
NOVEMBER

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| 8 Sunday | Ocean Kayaking at Ninigret Saltwater Pond (Block Island Sound) <i>Charlestown, Rhode Island</i> |
| 14 Saturday | Shatterack Mountain Hike, <i>Russell</i> |
| 15 Sunday | Astronomy Walk Series: Observing Basics, <i>Easthampton</i> |
| 18 Wednesday | November Meeting: The Andes ~ Backbone of South America |
| 19 Thursday | Fannie Stebbins Wildlife Refuge Walk, <i>Longmeadow</i> |
| 21 Saturday | Dinosaurs and Edward Hitchcock, <i>Amherst</i> |
| 29 Sunday | Hiking the Holyoke Range, <i>Amherst</i> |



DECEMBER

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| 6 Sunday | Annual Late Fall Quabbin Hike, <i>New Salem</i> |
| 6 Sunday | Snowshoeing Introduction ~ Get Out and Explore Nature in Winter! <i>Holyoke</i> |
| 12 Saturday | An Evening With Naturalists, <i>Hampden</i> |
| 13 Sunday | Astronomy Walk Series: Star Formation & Life Cycle, <i>Easthampton</i> |
| 16 Wednesday | December Holidays Meeting |
| 17 Thursday | A Walk in the Park, <i>West Springfield</i> |
| 18 Friday | Nighttime at Noble View, <i>Russell</i> |
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A COAT FOR EACH SEASON....

Color the deer brown, the color-by-number book instructed.

"No, color the deer red," I told my niece.

"Red! Deer aren't red," she said as she grabbed the brown crayon. Already my 6-year-old niece was sucked into the way of the world teaching us each animal is a given color.

"Well, if it were winter, I'd agree. This coloring book must have been made in winter. But, it's summer. Deer are kind of reddish now." She reluctantly picked up the fire engine red crayon. "Well, maybe not exactly that shade of red," I admitted. "How about coloring it brown first, then highlights of red on top." It was a good compromise; more realistic too. She was happy to follow the printed instructions and I was satisfied, having given an enlightening natural history lesson to my niece, whether she liked it or not.

Yes, white-tailed deer change coats with the seasons. We can relate to that: It's too hot for a heavy winter coat in the summer.

Air is the world's best insulator. This sounds like a grand assumption, but it's true. I don't know exactly the technical measurements and experimental data that bear this out, but I know it must be true, from observing the world around me. Take the insulation in your house. That layered pink fiberglass is light and fluffy to trap and hold air in place, to stop convection between the cold and warm places. The fiberglass itself is not particularly insulating, but the fact that it can trap air is the secret to its success. It works because any form of insulation, be it fiberglass batting, expanded polystyrene or cellulose, eliminates convection, the movement of air. Insulators also separate cold from warm spots, lessening conduction.

We've learned this principle from nature. In a cold climate any way a creature can hold and trap air next to its body for insulation is a good plan. Ducks that live in northern waters have done this to perfection. Down is a type of feather designed just for this purpose. Down feathers are hidden underneath the contour feathers. Down feathers are loose and unorganized. Contour feathers are tight and sleek. Take the neatly folded and creased newspaper that stacks tidily in a box. Those will be the contour feathers. If you separate each of those papers out, crumple each into a ball, that's down feathers. They don't fit so nicely in that box anymore, either. You've created nooks and crannies for air to be, and it takes up a lot more space. That's how ducks stay warm. Not with crumpled newspaper, but with fluffy down feathers trapping air between the duck's body and the waterproof contour feathers. Songbirds, too, puff up and look like little chubby balls on cold winter days. They are expanding their down feathers to hold more air.

White-tailed deer also make use of air for its insulative value. Each winter hair is thick and hollow inside, like a miniature straw. Layers of these air-filled hairs help keep a deer's core protected from the cold. Winter fur gives a deer a shaggy, heavy-coated look.

Summer brings warmth but also bugs. In spring a deer sheds its heavy winter coat by the tufts. Finer hairs replace it. The number of hairs per area is actually more in the summer coat than in the winter coat because each hair is thinner. These overlapping hairs serve as insect protection. Summer hair lies flat and closer to the skin, giving the deer a sleek and tidy appearance.

As far as color goes, it seems to me to be a product of selective adaptation. The gray/brown winter coat certainly helps the deer blend in with its winter surroundings better than the reddish/brown coat of summer.

So, there you go! You can color your deer however you like ~ as long as it is seasonally appropriate.

~ Nancy Condon ~

OUR 40th ANNIVERSARY!



The Naturalists' Club's 40th Anniversary Weekend, Russell

4 p.m. Friday, October 2, to noontime Sunday, October 4

Registration: Please contact Nancy Condon (413-564-0895 or spiderwoman@russelma.net) to RSVP and help her coordinate accommodations and meal planning.

Place: Appalachian Mountain Club's Noble View Outdoor Center

Can you believe it? The Club is 40 years old this year! Don't miss out on the festivities and events planned to celebrate this momentous occasion. You can come for the whole weekend at AMC's Noble View facilities or come just for the daytime activities.

ACTIVITIES

Friday: Potluck supper ~ Participants bring a dish to pass.

Astronomy ~ Jack Megias

Campfire Camaraderie

Saturday: 7:00 Early morning walk

7:30 Pancake Breakfast for overnighers

8:30-10:00 Hikes and Activities:

Nature Photography ~ Kevin Kopchinski

Hike to the Kiln ~ Dave Gallup

Mammals of New England ~ Dave Lovejoy

10:30-12:00 Hikes and Activities:

Nature Under a Microscope ~ Sonya Vickers

Reading Signs of Forest History ~ Dr. Tim Parshall

12:00-12:45 Catered buffet lunch

1:30-3:00 Hikes and Activities:

Birdhouse building ~ Bill Fontaine, Tom Condon

Stone Walls & Cellar Holes ~ Dietrich Schlobohm

3:30-5:00 Hikes and Activities:

Scat & Skulls ~ Bob Kidd

Noble View: Past, Present and Future ~ Gary Forish

6:00 Anniversary Celebration Dinner

Astronomy ~ Chris Lyons

Campfire Camaraderie

Sunday: 7:00 Early morning walk

8:00 Breakfast for overnighers

Departure by noon

ACCOMMODATIONS

Double Cottage: \$15/person/night

Sleeping for 18: 6 rooms with 2 single beds

3 rooms with 3 single beds

Electricity, stove, refrigerator, pots, pans & dishes and woodstove for heat

NO POTABLE WATER ~ bring water for cooking and drinking. Wash water is available.

No linens ~ bring your own

Outhouse facilities

Camping: \$10/person/night

Bring your own tent ~ plenty of grassy field space

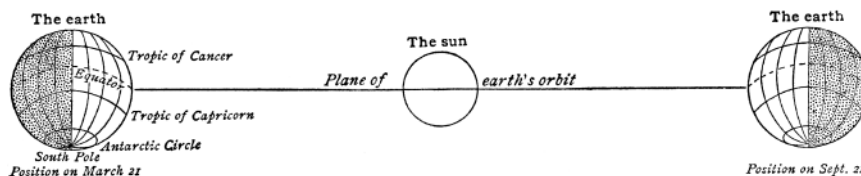
NO POTABLE WATER ~ bring water for cooking and drinking. Wash water is available.

Outhouse facilities

Firewood provided for outdoor fireplace

Daytime participants ~ \$5/person/day

Nonmembers ~ \$15 for all day Saturday



New Meeting Place for Naturalists' Club at the Springfield Science Museum

We have just been informed that from here on out, the Club will be meeting in the Science Workshop Room on the second floor of the Science Museum (next to the planetarium) as the Tolman Wing is now a new dinosaur hall! Guards will be greeting people the night of the September meeting and directing them where to go. And no worries ~ there's elevator access to the second floor.

Alander Mt. Trail, Mt. Washington

Saturday, October 17, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Leader: Bill Fontaine

Meeting Place: Friendly's parking lot, Great Barrington, Mass., on Route 7 just north of the Route 23 intersection.

Registration: Call Bill (413-533-2153)

The views from the summit of Alander Mountain are well worth the effort it takes to get there. This area has been described as one of the most beautiful and ecologically significant regions in the Northeast. The Nature Conservancy has called it one of the nation's "Last Great Places."

On this strenuous 5.5-mile round trip hike, we'll climb to the summit of Alander Mt. on the western escarpment of the Taconic Range to enjoy views overlooking the Harlem Valley and Catskills to the west, Mt. Everett to the north, and Mt. Frissell and Bear Mountain to the east and south. Our journey will take us through a red oak-northern hardwood forest and along a hemlock ravine that channels Ashley Brook, one of the tributaries that feeds Bash Bish Falls. This remote area is home to bear, coyotes and bobcat. Dress in layers and bring sturdy footwear and something to eat and drink.

Turtle Bend Mountain, Russell

Sunday, October 18, from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Leaders: Sheila Croteau (413-732-7254) and Nancy Condon (413-564-0895)

Registration: Please call to register.

Meeting Place: By the Westfield River bridge on Main Street in Russell.

Avid hikers are welcome to join us for this over-the-mountain hike on Unkamit's Path (or the U.P.), a trail named for an Indian guide who led travelers and settlers through the Westfield River Valley during colonial times. We will tackle a 2.5-mile section over Turtle Bend Mountain in Russell. This little-used trail leads us up to the top of this singular, round hill for a view of the Westfield River Valley below, Shatterack and Tekoa Mountains across the river, and the horizons beyond. Fall colors will only enhance the picturesque scenery from the top.

Be aware that there are some steep sections. This is a rugged, challenging trail, for adventurous hikers only. Many blow-downs make bushwhacking necessary, and the trail is overgrown with brambles in some sections as well, so long pants are recommended.

We will leave some cars at the meeting place, then shuttle to the start of the hike on Route 20 in Russell. Be sure to wear sturdy, supportive hiking boots. Bring a lunch and water. A hiking stick is recommended as well as an adventurous spirit.

Astronomy Walk Series: SATURN and Its Many MOONS!! Easthampton

Sunday, October 18, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Leader: Chris Lyons, Astronomy Educator (e-mail: Programs@GlassVisions.biz; phone: 413-562-4740)

Fee: \$5 Naturalists' Club members, \$8 others (*Fee covers auditorium use.*)

Meeting Place: Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon), Main Building

Come learn about the beauty and wonder of the universe around us! Saturn, the mighty ringed world of the solar system, inspires *awe and wonder* in all. We are alive at a great point in history, with a front row seat for the many exploratory missions undertaken to learn more about Saturn and its spectacular set of moons. Please join astronomy educator Chris Lyons for a detailed look at Saturn, its moons, and the amazing things we've learned over the past 30 years.

This is a fun active-learning indoor/outdoor program for adults (16 and up), with a presentation given in the Arcadia auditorium each month, followed by outside sky observing with eyes and binoculars (*weather permitting*). No need to attend all sessions; topics are continually reviewed to help keep everyone up to speed, so please join us whenever you are available. Please dress appropriately, bring binoculars if you have them (several pair will be available if you don't), and be ready to **take a walk through the universe!** Please contact me if you have any questions.

Please see page 10 of the Spring 2008 Club Newsletter (also available online) for more information about the 'Astronomy Walk Series.'

This poem received its inspiration from numerous trips by the author into the northern woods of Maine, above Moosehead Lake. Considering the tremendous pressures to develop parts of this last great forested area of the Northeast, the future of this area, especially in Maine, is presently uncertain.

where howling wolves pierced the stillness of night
where Skraelings* once trod
where seas of boreal green waved uninterrupted
where no iron horse penetrated
where Thoreau was intimidated
where nature's indifference was understood
where wild iris, bunchberry, and clintonia
blossomed untrampled
where no skidder violated and scarred
where the voices of the wind breathe unchallenged
where man's arrogance becomes awe

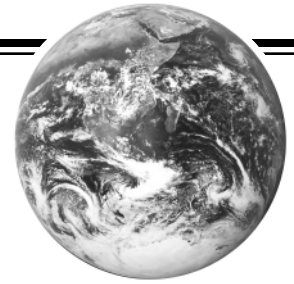
~ Dietrich Schlobohm ~

*Norse word for aboriginal peoples

OCTOBER MEETING

A BRIEF NATURAL HISTORY OF THE CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY LANDSCAPE, FROM THE BIG BANG TO THE PRESENT

Wednesday, October 21, at 7:30 p.m.
Springfield Science Museum, Science Workshop Room (Second Floor)
Speaker: Brian Hawthorne



Every culture has its own creation myth: the story of how the land came to be. Starting at the very beginning, naturalist, forester, and wildlife biologist Brian Hawthorne will tell a creation story of the Connecticut River Valley, providing a sense of context to the natural world we see around us today. Spanning time scales from cosmologic to geologic to evolutionary to glacial to human, we will experience the changing landscape that resulted in the place where we live and work.

Like most naturalists, Brian Hawthorne first fell in love with nature as a child, exploring the woods and fields of Concord, Massachusetts and the mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire. Brian studied the forest ecology of our region at the University of Massachusetts, and is currently employed by MassWildlife. He also regularly leads groups of adults and children on woods walks and teaches workshops on earth spirituality. Brian lives in the Berkshire Highlands of western Massachusetts.

A Fall Walk, Agawam

Thursday, October 22, from 8:30 a.m. till noon

Leader: Colette Potter

Place: Robinson State Park

Hopefully, this will be a nice day with the fall foliage and crisp air ~ a day to enjoy nature. Call to register (413-786-1805). Bad weather cancels.

Ocean Kayaking at Cohasset Harbor and Minot's Ledge Light, Cohasset

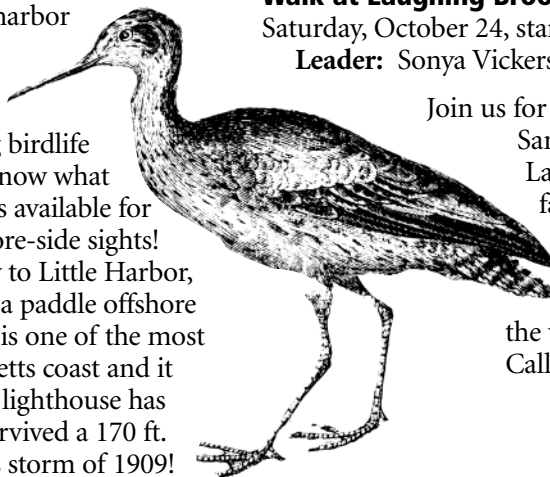
Saturday, October 24, from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Leader: Chris Lyons, Sea Kayaker and Naturalist
(e-mail: Programs@GlassVisions.biz; phone: 413-562-4740)

Registration: REQUIRED by 10/20/09. Please contact Chris directly.

Meeting Place: 8 a.m. sharp at Barnes & Noble parking lot in Holyoke. After getting a count of everyone and doing a quick gear check, we'll head out by 8:15 a.m. We'll caravan east, along the Mass Pike and I-95 to our launch site at Cohasset.

The paddling options around Cohasset are quite varied and always VERY interesting! The harbor itself is quite small, but there are many exploration options in the surrounding marshes, including Sandy Cove, Briggs Harbor, and Scituate Neck. The migrating birdlife can always bring surprises, so you never know what might be seen. There are plenty of beaches available for landing and enjoying the beautiful fall shore-side sights! We might play in the currents at the entry to Little Harbor, or if the weather cooperates we might try a paddle offshore about a mile to Minot's Ledge Light. This is one of the most spectacular lighthouses on the Massachusetts coast and it has quite a history, too. The present stone lighthouse has stood on this small reef since 1860 and survived a 170 ft. wave that rolled through in the Christmas storm of 1909!



This trip can be tailored to the skills of the group and is appropriate for INTERMEDIATE paddlers. Plan on 8 to 12 miles of paddling at a medium pace, with several regroup stops if/when paddlers get separated. Please dress appropriately, pack your camera and binoculars, and bring water and your lunch.

Each person must supply his/her own kayak, paddle, and associated gear. If you don't have your own, kayaks can be rented locally and car-topped down to our put-in. There may also be some rental options in the Cohasset area. If looking to rent, please contact me ASAP, and I'll provide you with contact information for the best rental outfitters.

The trip will run unless continuous rain or high winds are forecasted. As with all paddling trips in my Kayak Series, you **MUST** have attended my Sea Kayak Intro Course or have met with me to discuss your kayaking experience and receive approval for participation. *Please review the Series Introduction section in the Spring 2008 Club Newsletter (also available online) for more information on my club kayaking activities and necessary experience. If you have ANY questions, please contact me ASAP.*

Walk at Laughing Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, Hampden

Saturday, October 24, starting at 10 a.m.

Leader: Sonya Vickers (413-566-3406)

Join us for a walk at Laughing Brook Wildlife Sanctuary. We will walk along the Laughing Brook of Thornton Burgess fame, noticing how this forest has changed over time. There are birds to see at the pool, and Sonya will bring along hand lenses so even the very small things can be appreciated. Call for directions.

Ocean Kayaking at Ninigret Saltwater Pond

(Block Island Sound), Charlestown, Rhode Island

Sunday, November 8, from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Leader: Chris Lyons, Sea Kayaker and Naturalist
(e-mail: Programs@GlassVisions.biz; phone: 413-562-4740)

Registration: REQUIRED by 11/3/09. Please contact Chris directly.

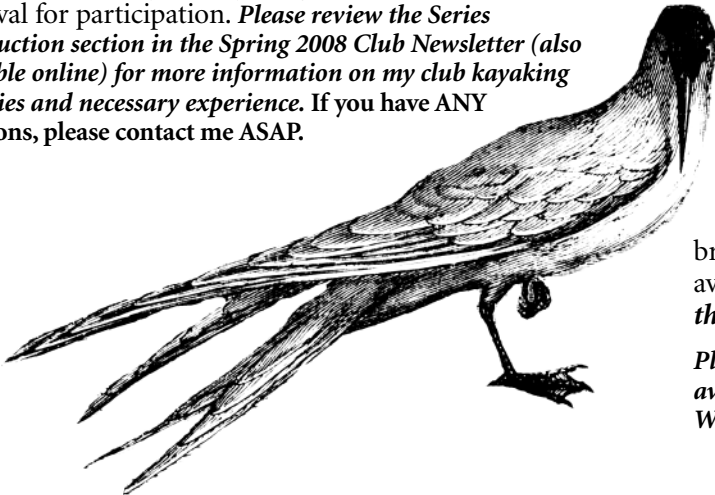
Meeting Place: 8:30 a.m. sharp at Springfield Basketball Hall of Fame parking lot (near Uno's Pizzeria). After getting a count of everyone and doing a quick gear check, we'll head out by 8:45 a.m. We'll caravan south, along I-91, to Hartford and then down Rt. 2 to I-95 to our launch site at Charlestown, Rhode Island.

This will be the last paddle of the 2009 season, and we'll be heading to beautiful Ninigret Pond in Rhode Island. This is one of the best bird watching areas available to kayakers and it always provides many treats, whatever time of year it is explored! Ninigret sits right on the Rhode Island coastline (just a few miles east of Misquamicut) but is protected by a large beach area that keeps it well-protected and warm, for paddling. We'll paddle and explore many areas of the pond and have lunch on the beach. Come take your last strokes of the year at this pristine paddling spot and enjoy a fabulous day amongst the majestic beauty of nature!

This trip can be tailored to the skills of the group and is appropriate for BEGINNER-INTERMEDIATE paddlers. Plan on 8 to 12 miles of paddling at a medium pace, with several regroup stops if/when paddlers get separated. Please dress appropriately, pack your camera and binoculars, and bring water and your lunch.

Each person must supply his/her own kayak, paddle, and associated gear. If you don't have your own, kayaks can be rented locally and car-topped down to our put-in. There may also be some rental options in the Charlestown area. If looking to rent, please contact me ASAP, and I'll provide you with contact information for the best rental outfitters.

The trip will run unless there is continuous rain or high winds forecasted. As with all paddling trips in my Kayak Series, you **MUST** have attended my Sea Kayak Intro Course or have met with me to discuss your kayaking experience and received approval for participation. *Please review the Series Introduction section in the Spring 2008 Club Newsletter (also available online) for more information on my club kayaking activities and necessary experience.* If you have ANY questions, please contact me ASAP.



Shatterack Mountain Hike, Russell

Saturday, November 14, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Leaders: Tom and Nancy Condon

Registration: Please call to register (413-564-0895).

Meeting Place: Westfield State commuter parking lot

Rising up over the village of Russell is Shatterack Mountain. The views from the peak offer spectacular vistas of the Westfield River and the surrounding mountains. A short but steep descent will bring us to Shatterack Brook, which we'll trace back to near its source on the mountain. Stopping along the trail, we will discuss the signs of reforestation from recent fire, autumn tree identification, and the strategies of wildlife as they prepare for the coming winter.

This 1.8-mile hike is for experienced hikers. In places the going can be rough. Although we will travel at a casual pace, there will be times when significant elevation is gained and lost in a short distance. Please wear sturdy, supportive footwear, dress for the weather, pack a lunch, and carry plenty of water.

Astronomy Walk Series: Observing Basics, Easthampton

Sunday, November 15, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Leader: Chris Lyons, Astronomy Educator

(e-mail: Programs@GlassVisions.biz; phone: 413-562-4740)

Fee: \$5 Naturalists' Club members, \$8 others (*Fee covers auditorium use.*)

Meeting Place: Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon), Main Building

Would you like to learn more about *stars*, *constellations*, and the *night sky*? If so, please join astronomy educator Chris Lyons for a detailed review of the important things you need to know to get started. We'll review some of the main constellations, look at sky navigation techniques, review star charts (*i.e., maps of the sky!*) and computer-based charting programs, as well as tackling binocular basics and taking a peek at some of the astronomical targets available to you. If you've been thinking about getting involved in the series, this is a perfect time to start! If you are a loyal follower, don't worry, this session will help fine-tune your observing arsenal, and I guarantee there will be something new to learn!

This is a fun active-learning indoor/outdoor program for adults (16 and up), with a presentation given in the Arcadia auditorium each month, followed by outside sky observing with eyes and binoculars (*weather permitting*). No need to attend all sessions; topics are continually reviewed to help keep everyone up to speed, so please join us whenever you are available. Please dress appropriately, bring binoculars if you have them (several pair will be available if you don't), and be ready to **take a walk through the universe!** Please contact me if you have any questions.

Please see page 10 of the Spring 2008 Club Newsletter (also available online) for more information about the 'Astronomy Walk Series.'

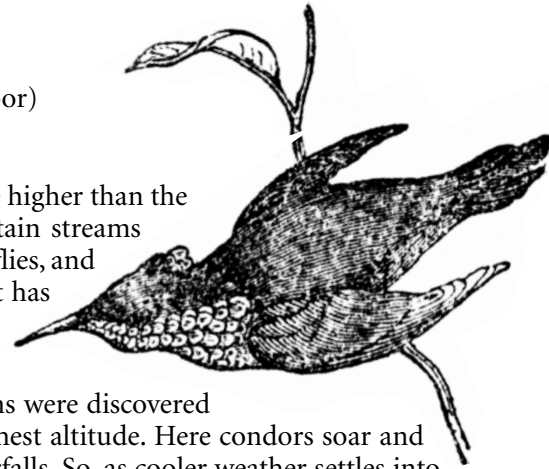
NOVEMBER MEETING

THE ANDES ~ BACKBONE OF SOUTH AMERICA

Wednesday, November 18, at 7:30 p.m.
Springfield Science Museum, Science Workshop Room (Second Floor)
Speaker: Sonya Vickers

The Andes Mountains run the length of the western side of South America. They are higher than the Rockies and reveal an incredible array of biodiversity. On the eastern side, mountain streams drain into the Amazon basin, home ground to an amazing number of orchids, butterflies, and hummingbirds. On the western side, one can find the driest place on earth, where it has not rained for decades.

Sonya Vickers has traveled in the mountains of Ecuador, where snow-capped peaks straddle the equator. Further south is the isolated mountaintop site where Inca ruins were discovered at Machu Picchu. Even further south, in Chile, the mountain range reaches the highest altitude. Here condors soar and glaciers dig their way to the sea through fjords that are deep and studded with waterfalls. So, as cooler weather settles into New England, come southward, where near the equator seasons never change and where in Chile summer is just beginning.



Fannie Stebbins Wildlife Refuge Walk, *Longmeadow*
Thursday, November 19, from 8:30 a.m. till noon
Leader: Colette Potter

A good walk, just before the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. You can always find something of interest in the outdoors, at any season. Call to register (413-786-1805). Bad weather cancels.

Dinosaurs and Edward Hitchcock, *Amherst*
Saturday, November 21, at 11 a.m.
Leaders: David Gallup and Richard Sanderson (413-525-4697)

Meeting Place: The Amherst College Museum of Natural History (formerly the Pratt Museum), near the corner of Routes 9 and 116 in the center of Amherst. Free admission.

Richard Sanderson, curator of physical science at the Springfield Science Museum, will give us an introduction to the life of geologist Edward Hitchcock and the discovery of dinosaur tracks in our valley. The rest of the day is yours, to tour the impressive museum on your own. This museum has an extensive collection of dinosaur tracks collected by the great geologist and one-time president of Amherst College during the 19th century, Edward Hitchcock.

Hiking the Holyoke Range, *Amherst*
Sunday, November 29, starting at 9 a.m.
Leaders: Dave and Suzy Gallup
Meeting Place: Notch Visitors Center Route 116 in Amherst. Call Dave for more information (413-525-4697).

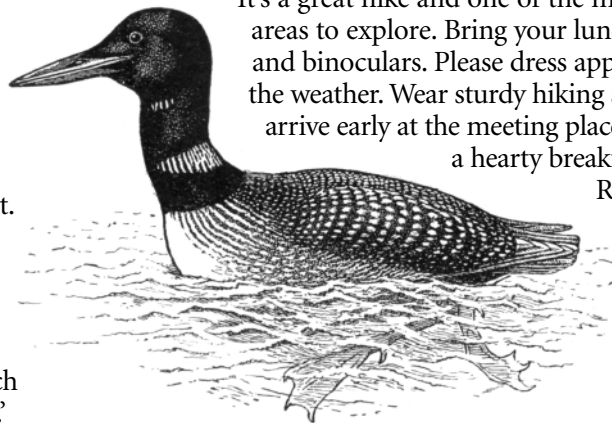
Join us for a hike through the Holyoke Range. We will be hiking the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail to the top of Mt. Norwottuck, the highest mountain on the range. Along the way, we will talk about the geology and the forest. After lunch on the summit of Norwottuck, we'll hike to the 'horse caves.'

Here we will trace the steps of Daniel Shays (c. 1787). Legend proclaims that Shays escaped to the horse caves on the range after an ill-fated attempt to raid the Springfield Armory. From the horse caves, we will connect to the Robert Frost Trail on our hike back to the Visitor's Center. We suggest that participants look up Shays' Rebellion on the Internet at www.encycarta.msn.com and bring your favorite Robert Frost poem to read. Please wear sturdy footwear and bring a snack/lunch and water. This is a 3-mile moderately strenuous hike.

Annual Late Fall Quabbin Hike, *New Salem*
Sunday, December 6, starting at 10 a.m.
Leaders: Dave and Suzy Gallup (413-525-4697)
Meeting Place: Crystal Springs Mall, Route 9 and 202, Belchertown

It's that time of the year again, folks! Our destination is Gate 15, which takes us on a wonderful loop hike with great views of the northern section of the Quabbin. Lots of stonewalls and farm sites. There is a chance of seeing eagles and perhaps hear loons! We have seen moose tracks on the sandy beaches.

It's a great hike and one of the most beautiful areas to explore. Bring your lunch, hot drinks, and binoculars. Please dress appropriately for the weather. Wear sturdy hiking shoes. If you arrive early at the meeting place, you can enjoy a hearty breakfast at Hawley's Restaurant. See you there!



Snowshoeing Introduction ~ Get out and explore NATURE in WINTER! *Holyoke*

Sunday, December 6, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. (or later if interested in an optional hike/snowshoe at Mt. Tom)

Leader: Chris Lyons, Snowshoer and Naturalist (e-mail: Programs@GlassVisions.biz, phone: 413-562-4740)

Registration: REQUIRED. Please contact me to register!

Meeting Place: 11 a.m. at the Barnes & Noble Coffee Shop in Holyoke (7 Holyoke Street, on the access road to the Holyoke Mall).

Snowshoeing is a fabulous and inexpensive way to enjoy the outdoors during the winter. The snowy winter scenes are heavenly, and snowshoes give you super exercise while providing views of the natural world most never even know exist. There is not really a lot of technique involved with snowshoeing: if you can walk, you can snowshoe!

We'll meet in the coffee shop, and I'll provide an overview of the things you need to know to get started, including gear options, techniques, packing, safety, and trip planning (handout will be available). I'll provide lots of information about the best local places to snowshoe and will also give hints about a few of the very special places to visit in New England. I'll be leading snowshoeing trips for the club starting in January, and this will be a great opportunity to finalize your wish list for Santa's visit in a few weeks!

For those interested, I may lead a quick hike/snowshoe at Mt. Tom in Holyoke in the afternoon. (*Please let me know you're interested when you register.*) If coming on the hike/snowshoe, please bring your gear (i.e., snowshoes, poles, pack, layered clothing, winter hiking boots, water and snacks, etc.).

Snowshoeing is a great way to enjoy the beauty and wonder of the natural world in winter, so please plan on attending! If you have ANY questions, please contact me ASAP.

An Evening with Naturalists, Hampden

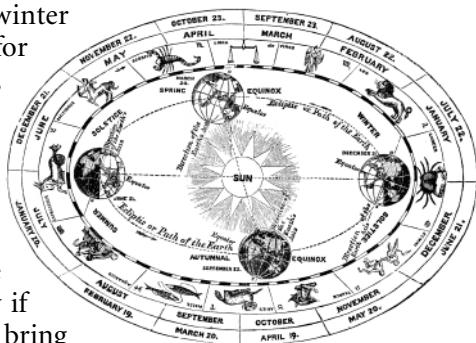
Saturday, December 12, from 7 p.m. onward

Leader: Sonya Vickers (413-566-3406)

Registration: Please call for directions.

Join us for this winter evening gathering for conversation, food and drink, and the warmth of friendship around the fireplace. There will be desserts and refreshments to share ~ please let us know if

you would like to bring something along. Also, if you would like, bring along an object, story, or picture you would like to share with others. Directions will be provided when you call to register. Extreme weather cancels.



Astronomy Walk Series: Star Formation & Life Cycle, *Easthampton*

Sunday, December 13, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Leader: Chris Lyons, Astronomy Educator (e-mail: Programs@GlassVisions.biz; phone: 413-562-4740)

Fee: \$5 Naturalists' Club members, \$8 others (*Fee covers auditorium use.*)

Meeting Place: Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon), Main Building

Stars have a life cycle just like humans and all living things: *they're born, live their lives, and finally die.* Stars provide the basic materials that make up everything in the universe, including ourselves and our beautiful blue-green home, planet Earth. Stars are also responsible for generating the energy that sustains life, so their importance cannot be overstated! Join astronomy educator Chris Lyons for a closer look at how stars form, what guides their lives and how they impact ours, and how they eventually come to their end. This fun program will help you better understand the *faint points of light* we see in the sky each and every night!

This is a fun active-learning indoor/outdoor program for adults (16 and up), with a presentation given in the Arcadia auditorium each month, followed by outside sky observing with eyes and binoculars (*weather permitting*). No need to attend all sessions; topics are continually reviewed to help keep everyone up to speed, so please join us whenever you are available. Please dress appropriately, bring binoculars if you have them (several pair will be available if you don't), and be ready to **take a walk through the universe!** Please contact me if you have any questions.

Please see page 10 of the Spring 2008 Club Newsletter (also available online) for more information about the 'Astronomy Walk Series.'

Greek Isle Trip ~ June 2010

How would you like to go island hopping in the Greek Isles? Sonya Vickers is leading a land and sea trip to Greece and the islands in the Mediterranean. We will explore Athens and the Parthenon, then travel to Delphi. We will board a ship for 5 days and cruise the Greek Islands, including Santorini, Rhodes, Mykonos and Crete. A trip to Turkey will include the ancient city of Ephesus. Back on land, we will explore Epidaurus, Mycenae, Argolida and Olympia. This 13-day trip will delight those who want to learn more about Greek ancient history and take in the natural history of this unique area. This is a student trip and so boasts a low price which includes airfare. We will be leaving in early June 2010. If this sounds interesting and you would like more details, call Sonya Vickers at 413-566-3406



DECEMBER HOLIDAYS MEETING

Wednesday, December 16, at 7:30 p.m.
Springfield Science Museum, Science Workshop Room (Second Floor)

Presenters: You!

M.C.: Nancy Condon (413-564-0895)

Our annual holiday meeting is an opportunity for you to share your most memorable and interesting nature and travel experiences with other club members. Have you visited someplace you would recommend to others? Do you have photos of Naturalists' Club events from this past year? We want to hear from you. Show us some of the highlights by way of slides, PowerPoint, or a photo album. Presentations can be no longer than 10 minutes in length. Or bring artifacts or natural treasures to show off in the nature displays. Please bring along a holiday dessert to share with the group after the presentations. Come, let's celebrate together. Call Nancy, please, to get on the roster for presentations.

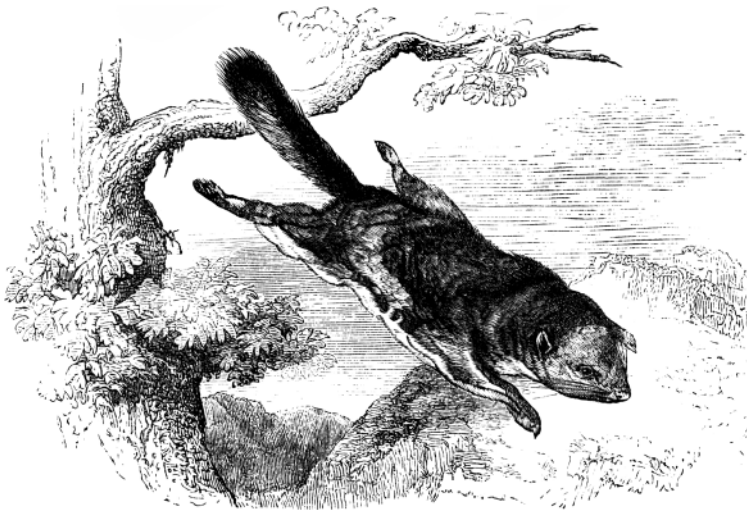
A Walk in the Park, West Springfield

Thursday, December 17, from 9 a.m. till noon

Leader: Colette Potter

Place: Mittineague Park

Depending on the weather, we can take a walk, do some tracking if there is snow, or snowshoeing if deep enough. Call to register (413-786-1805). Bad weather cancels.



Nighttime at Noble View, Russell

Friday, December 18, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Leaders: Tom and Nancy Condon
Registration: Please call to register (413-564-0895).

Meeting Place: Noble View parking area, South Quarter Road, Russell. Heavy rain or heavy snow cancels; light snow would be a delight.

Officially, winter is just a few days away (December 21). Join us for a pleasant, leisurely nighttime walk along the road to the Appalachian Mountain Club's Noble View cabin. Along the way, learn how to call for owls. They will not be nesting until next month, but it is worth a try. We will be alert for other nighttime creatures, like porcupine or flying squirrels. Our destination will be the stunning view down into Westfield, where we'll enjoy a little stargazing (if the weather permits) and some hot chocolate and goodies at the picnic table. Bring along a mug and flashlight. Dress for the weather. Although this hike is free, a donation to help preserve this beautiful piece of AMC property is suggested.



The NATURALISTS' CLUB
2008-2009

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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.

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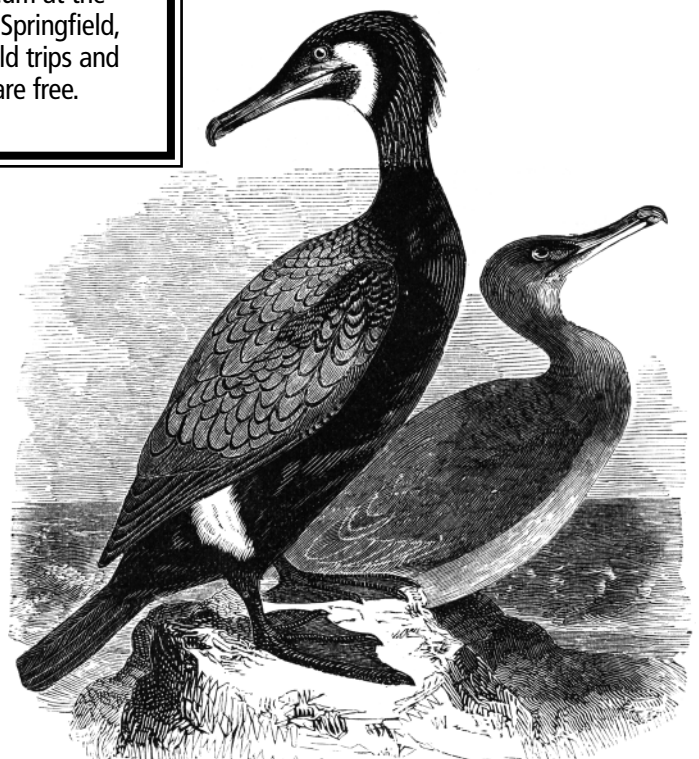
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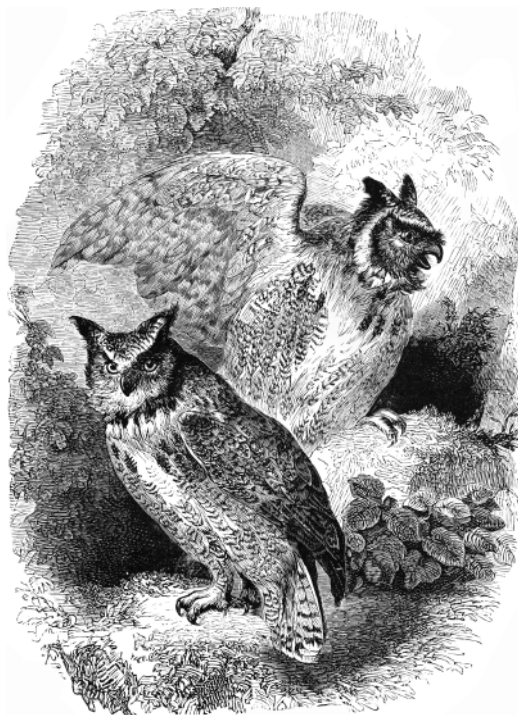
FROM THE TREASURER

The fall of the year is the traditional time to renew membership in the Club. Those of you with an "09-10" on your newsletter mailing label are paid up for the coming year. Otherwise, your dues are owed for the year starting September 2009. You may renew by sending a check (payable to The Naturalists' Club) to Dave Lovejoy, Department of Biology, Westfield State College, Westfield, MA 01086 or by giving the check to Dave at the next monthly meeting. Membership levels are indicated elsewhere on this page.

Please note: Dave Lovejoy maintains the Naturalists' Club mailing list. 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



BECOME A CLUB MEMBER OR
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR

2009-2010

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 College, Westfield, MA 01086.

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*



Springfield Science Museum at the Quadrangle, Springfield, Massachusetts
www.naturalist-club.org

The NATURALISTS' CLUB Newsletter

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The Naturalists' Club
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