



The Naturalists' Club - Dept. of Biology
 Westfield State University
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THE NATURALISTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

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

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OCTOBER to DECEMBER SCHEDULE of ACTIVITIES

OCTOBER	Sunday	3	Exploring the Mouth of a Great River, <i>Old Lyme, Connecticut</i>
	Saturday	9	Nature Bike Hike, <i>Southwick</i>
	Saturday	16	Benedict Pond, Beartown State Forest, <i>Monterey</i>
	Thursday	21	Catching the Autumn Breeze at Ashley Reservoir, <i>Holyoke</i>
	Sunday	24	A Fall Walk, <i>Chester</i>
	Wednesday	27	OCTOBER BANQUET Meeting at Munich Haus Restaurant, <i>Chicopee</i>
NOVEMBER	Sunday	7	Autumn Hike at Hampden Brook, <i>Hampden</i>
	Saturday	13	Digital Macro Photography, <i>Westfield</i>
	Wednesday	17	NOVEMBER MEETING: The Weird, Wacky, and Wonderful Moons of the Solar System
	Thursday	18	A Morning in Mid-Autumn, <i>Westfield</i>
	Saturday	20	Alander~Bash-Bish Traverse, <i>Mt. Washington</i>
	Sunday	21	Hiking the AT in Mt. Greylock State Reservation, <i>Adams</i>
	Saturday	27	A Peaked Mountain Hike After Your Thanksgiving Holiday, <i>Monson</i>
DECEMBER	Friday	3	Nighttime at Noble View, <i>Russell</i>
	Saturday	11	An Evening with Naturalists, <i>Hampden</i>
	Sunday	12	Annual Late Fall Quabbin Hike, <i>New Salem</i>
	Wednesday	15	DECEMBER HOLIDAYS MEETING
	Thursday	16	Fannie Stebbins Memorial Wildlife Refuge, <i>Longmeadow</i>

4th
 Wednesday!



NATURALIST'S CORNER



FUTURE ENERGY CONSIDERATIONS

Twenty or so years ago, it was a startling fact that the U.S. used more energy just for air-conditioning than China (then and now the world's most populous country) used for its total electrical needs. At that time the U.S. was at the top of the charts in terms of consuming energy. With China's recent "modernization," a report by the International Energy Agency lists that country as the world's largest consumer of energy as of 2009.

For several years global climate change has been a prominent international issue, and the top energy-related story of 2010 has been the explosion and leak of BP's well in the Gulf of Mexico. Both of these stories involve the use of nonrenewable energy sources, which provide about 80% of the world's needs and an even greater percent in the U.S. Since nonrenewable energy obviously exists in a finite supply, a look to the future demands that the 80% figure eventually reach zero, but how and when? A look at the history of energy use may provide some clues.

Before the Industrial Revolution, nearly all energy sources were renewable (windmills, waterwheels, sailing ships, wood for fuel). In the mid 19th century, the use of nonrenewable coal increased greatly, providing 75% of the world's energy by 1900. By 1950 nonrenewable oil took first place (while coal usage remained significant, especially for electricity generation) and natural gas and nuclear, both nonrenewable, took on smaller but important roles. The timeline of this progression suggests it takes 50 years to make a major shift in energy source such as from wood to coal or coal to oil. Will it take this long to convert from nonrenewables to renewables? When does this conversion need to be made? Is it being made now at an adequate pace? There may be no clear answers to any of these questions, but it seems prudent that both decision-makers and individuals be well-informed.

For us in the Naturalists' Club, two renewable energy sources, wind and biomass, have been in the news in recent years. Wind farms have been proposed for sites in the Berkshires and off the coast on Cape Cod and perhaps elsewhere in the region. Invariably, they meet opposition by those who find wind machines unsightly and a hazard to bird and bat migration, among other issues. However, the use of wind to generate electricity is the world's fastest-growing energy source, with Denmark leading the way, generating 20% of its electricity with wind; wind machines are also that country's largest export. Wind generation is growing in the U.S. too, up to about 1% of our electrical generation in 2008, mostly in Texas and California. Why not in Massachusetts on suitable sites? Opposition is often based on the "NIMBY" argument ("Not in my backyard"). Admittedly, reaching a decision on a specific wind farm proposal will be complicated and difficult, but the issue of long-term conversion to renewables will not go away, and future energy sources in this state will likely include wind.

The local renewable issue of biomass for energy refers, of course, to the proposal for a wood-burning electricity-generating plant on the Westfield River in Russell. Here, opposition seems to have centered on issues of air quality, withdrawal of (too much) river water for cooling, and truck traffic issues. Perhaps the Russell proposal does not make environmental sense, but a recent state survey has suggested that western Massachusetts can support a small number of such plants contributing to our energy needs. At any rate, it is undeniable that the coming decades will see dramatic growth in renewable energy in western Massachusetts and around the world which, in combination with conservation efforts, will inevitably and dramatically change the way we acquire and use energy in this century.

~ Dave Lovejoy ~

2010 Westfield River Cleanup

Saturday, October 2, from 9 a.m. till 1 p.m.

This event takes place in conjunction with the Connecticut River Watershed Association's "Source to Sea" Cleanup. This annual event coordinates volunteers in beautifying our local rivers. Find a group working on the Connecticut River at www.ctriver.org > Programs > Outreach > Source to Sea. Or work with Westfield River Watershed Association volunteers focused on cleaning up the Westfield River (see below).

As in recent years, there will be two working group locations for the Westfield River cleanup: One will meet at the Westfield Gas and Electric substation parking area (near the new bridge) off Meadow Street, then fan out to sites on the Westfield and its tributaries in Westfield, Russell, Huntington, and West Springfield. A second group will meet in Agawam and work at sites in Agawam and at the mouth of the river. Both groups meet at 9 a.m. and typically work until about noon or 1 p.m. Remember to wear clothes that can get dirty; it's also helpful if you can bring your own work gloves and water. Trash bags will be supplied.

For more information, contact Mark Damon (572-9991) for the group meeting in Westfield or Sheryl Becker (821-0818) for the group meeting in Agawam. If you know of a particularly dirty site that we've missed before, let us know.

Exploring the Mouth of a Great River,

Old Lyme, Connecticut

Sunday, October 3, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

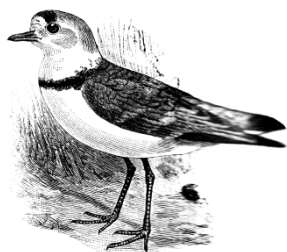
Leaders: Tom and Nancy Condon (564-0895)

Meeting Place: Basketball Hall of Fame parking lot, Springfield

It twists and turns thousands of times as it winds its way 410 miles south from the Canadian border. This is the Connecticut River. Explore with us the last few miles, where the fresh waters from New Hampshire and Vermont mix with the salt of Long Island Sound. This blending of the waters makes the mouth of the Connecticut River one of the most biologically diverse sections of the river. Perhaps this was one reason Roger Tory Peterson and Dr. Robert Ballard made their homes here.

We'll put in at the Old Lyme town boat launch and paddle down to Gillespie Point and the Sound. The point is an important nesting area for the endangered piping plover. Although long past nesting season, October offers us the opportunity to observe birds preparing for their migration south. Depending on weather and tides, we'll turn and circumnavigate Great Island, home to numerous osprey nesting platforms. Or perhaps we'll explore the quiet waters of Black Hall River. Expect to be in and out of boats as we explore the points and islands. We will plan to travel about 5 to 6 miles at a very leisurely pace. Dress for the weather, bring a lunch and plenty of water, and don't forget your binoculars.

Venture Crew 872 has offered to loan us canoes and paddles at a nominal charge. If you would like to borrow one, please call early. Space is limited, so even if you have your own boat, please call to reserve a space



Nature Bike Hike, *Southwick*

Saturday, October 9, from 10 a.m. till noon or a bit thereafter.

Leader: Dietrich Schlobohm (788-4125)

Meeting Place: Meet at the intersection of Route 168 (Congamond Rd.) and Miller Rd. in Southwick. There is a café at this intersection. To get there from the center of Southwick (intersection of Route 57 and 202/10), take 202 and 10 south for about 3 to 4 miles and then turn left on to Route 168.

Are you interested in getting some exercise and viewing a variety of beautiful natural landscapes? If so, join us for a nature bike hike on the newly completed Southwick Bike Trail. The trail goes through woodlands, wetlands, farm fields, and grasslands. We will stop at times to take in what nature has to offer us. Pack a lunch, some water, and perhaps binoculars.

Benedict Pond, Beartown State Forest, *Monterey*

Saturday, October 16, 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.

Catching the Autumn Breeze at Ashley Reservoir,

Holyoke

Thursday, October 21, starting at 9 a.m.

Leader: Colette Potter (786-1805)

This autumnal morning, head out on the waterfront trail around Ashley Reservoir to leisurely "be here now" with friends in these early fall surroundings. Please call to register and for meeting place. Bring your binoculars and dress for the weather. Bad weather cancels.

A Fall Walk, *Chester*

Sunday, October 24, from 12:30 p.m.

Leader: Dave Lovejoy (572-5307)

Meeting Place: For carpooling, meet Dave at the commuter parking lot at Westfield State University at 12:30 p.m. Alternatively, meet at the Chester-Blandford State Forest at 1:15 p.m., 4 miles west of Huntington on Route 20. To reach the trail head, turn onto Sanderson Brook Road (opposite Banish Lumber) and park in the small lot just a few feet up the road, on the right. Heavy rain cancels.

We will hike the short (1.5 mile) H. Newman Marsh Memorial trail up the north face of Observation Hill in the Chester-Blandford State Forest, which offers some 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). Foliage may be past its peak, but some color should remain, particularly the burnished reds and golds of oak trees on the surrounding mountaintops in view.

Please bear in mind that rather than being held the third Wednesday of the month, the Naturalists' Club October banquet meeting will be held the fourth Wednesday in October, the 27th ~ and obviously at a different location, the Munich Haus Restaurant in downtown Chicopee. Please see the October 27th banquet write-up for details.

OCTOBER BANQUET MEETING



4th
Wednesday!

MUNICH HAUS RESTAURANT

13 Center Street, Chicopee
Wednesday, October 27

It is time once again for us to celebrate as a club in one of the best ways we know how ~ by gathering together and eating! Our banquet will be a celebration of Massachusetts forests. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Tim Parshall, professor of biology and environmental science at Westfield State University, who will speak on Climate Change and Forest History.

We will also be honoring Bob Leverett with the Naturalists' Club Environmentalist of the Year award. Bob has dedicated much of his life's energies to preserving grand trees that make up old-growth forests. His work in promoting and preserving important forests here in Western Mass is worthy of recognition.

The evening will start off at a leisurely pace, with a social hour at 6, followed by buffet dinner at 7 p.m. The menu includes an offering of international cheeses and crackers, fresh fruit, chips & dips; salad, bread & butter; baked salmon, chicken Française, stuffed pork roast, a vegetarian pasta; oven-roasted potatoes and vegetable medley. Dessert will be an assortment of tortes served with coffee & tea. *Mm-mm*, sounds good! Cash bar throughout the evening.

Come help us celebrate Massachusetts forests at the Munich Haus in Chicopee on the evening of the fourth Wednesday in October, the 27th. (*Please take note of a change from our usual third Wednesday!*) Treasurer Dave Lovejoy will be accepting \$25 reservation checks payable to the Naturalists' Club at the September meeting or mailed to him at Department of Biology, Westfield State University, Westfield, MA 01086. Reservation deadline is October 22.

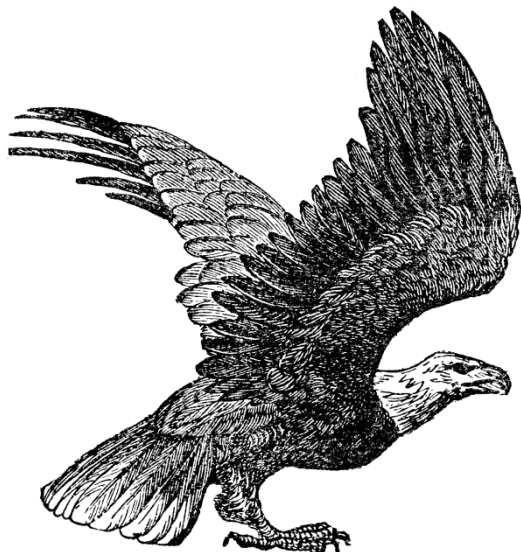
Directions to the Munich Haus: Travel on I-91 to I-391. Take the first exit (Chicopee Center). Turn off ramp onto Center Street, heading inland (east) from the Connecticut River. Go straight through the light. A half mile down on the right is The Munich Haus parking lot, with plenty of free parking...See you soon! (594-8788; www.munichhaus.com)

Autumn Hike at Laughing Brook, Hampden

Sunday, November 7, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon

Leaders: Dietrich Schlobohm (788-4125) and Kevin Kopchynski

Laughing Brook Wildlife Sanctuary officially reopened in September of 2008, after a disastrous flood and a long period of inactivity. It is now a passive sanctuary with a kiosk, toilet facility, and new parking area. We will be hiking part of the new self-guided nature trail and the East Brook Trail. The focus of our hike will be on nature and history and how the two have interacted with one another in this area. Wear supportive shoes and pack a lunch or snack.



Digital Macro Photography, Westfield

Saturday, November 13, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Leader: Sonya Vickers (566-3406)

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

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

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

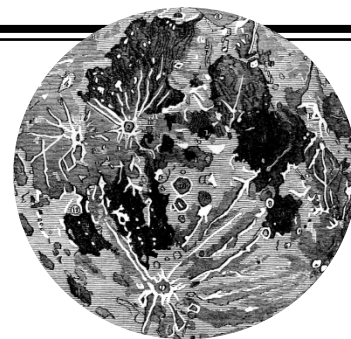
Ever wonder how to get good close-up pictures with your digital camera? Ever wonder how to use that symbol that looks like a flower on your camera? Come to this workshop with your camera, and learn how you can get great macro pictures of things in nature that are very small. You can come with a small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

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

NOVEMBER MEETING

THE WEIRD, WACKY, AND WONDERFUL MOONS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

Wednesday, November 17, at 7:30 p.m.
Springfield Science Museum, Tolman Auditorium
Presenter: Jack Megas



Most of us take the Moon for granted, yet few realize that without it, life might not be possible here on Earth. So we'll first focus on the Earth's moon. We will also take a tour of a score of the other 175 moons of our solar system to see how they differ from our closer-by, more familiar neighbor in space. Current NASA photos will be featured.

Jack Megas is a past president of both the Springfield Stars Club and the Naturalists' Club. He can regularly be found teaching at The Seymour Planetarium.

A Morning in Mid-Autumn, Westfield

Thursday, November 18, at 9:30 a.m.

Leader: Colette Potter (786-1805)

Place: Stanley Park

The touch of first frost shows upon the landscape, but warming sunshine may yet bring on another day of Indian summer. Come along for a pleasant stroll, conversing the while away in good company. And won't you be glad you joined in! Call to register and for meeting place. Bad weather cancels.

Alander ~ Bash-Bish Traverse, Mt. Washington

Saturday, November 20, from 8 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 (533-2153)

Views from the summit of Alander Mountain are well worth the effort it takes to get there. This remote 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 6.5-mile traverse, 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. Afterward, we'll continue north on the South Taconic Trail along Alander's open crest, an especially scenic section. Our journey will then take us over the northern shoulder of Bash-Bish Mt. for the steep descent to Bash-Bish Gorge and back to the shuttle cars.

Dress in layers, wear sturdy footwear, and bring along something to eat and drink. Bring poles, too, if you have them. The descent to the gorge is steep!

Hiking the AT in Mt. Greylock State Reservation, Adams

Sunday, November 21, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Leaders: Tom and Nancy Condon (564-0895)

Meeting Place: Friendly's Restaurant on Route 20 in Lee, just north of the Turnpike

Take a hike through a beautiful high-elevation spruce-fir forest. The forest here is really quite enchanting, hosting a variety of plant life, like wood sorrel, bunchberry, hobblebush, yellow birch, black cherry, mountain maple, and more. Our 5-mile yo-yo hike will start and end at the summit of Mt. Greylock. We will follow the Appalachian Trail north along the ridgeline. Once off the summit, the majority of our hike has only small ups and downs. The trail is very rocky, however, and supportive hiking boots are a good idea. With leaves off of trees, we should be able to get views near Mt. Fitch and from our destination, Mt. Williams.

Come prepared with a lunch, plenty of water, good hiking boots and a spirit of adventure.

A Peaked Mountain Hike After Your Thanksgiving Holiday, Monson

Saturday, November 27, from 10 a.m. till 2 p.m.

Leaders: Dave and Suzy Gallup (525-4697)

Meeting Place: Burlington Coat Factory at the shopping mall, Allen and Cooley Streets, Springfield

Join us and walk off those calories from that Thanksgiving dinner! We will start by hiking to the summit of Peaked Mountain, with its incredible vistas of the valley below. At the summit you can see all the way to Mt. Monadnock in New Hampshire!

This is a moderately strenuous hike. Bring a lunch and plenty of water. Sturdy hiking shoes are recommended, and don't forget your binoculars! Bring water and either lunch or snacks.

Nighttime at Noble View, Russell
Friday, December 3, from 7 to 9 p.m.
Leaders: Tom and Nancy Condon
Registration: Please call to register (564-0895).

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

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 porcupines or flying squirrels. Our destination will be the stunning view down into Westfield. The new moon is only two days away, so hopefully it will be dark enough for some excellent stargazing if the weather permits. We'll set up at the picnic tables by the overlook for some hot chocolate and cookies. Bring along a mug and flashlight and some goodies to share if you wish. Dress for the weather. Although this hike is free, a donation to help preserve this beautiful piece of AMC property is suggested.



An Evening with Naturalists, Hampden
Saturday, December 11, from 7 p.m. onward
Hostess: Sonya Vickers (566-3406)
Registration: Please call for directions.

Join us at this winter evening gathering geared to 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

Annual Late Fall Quabbin Hike, New Salem
Sunday, December 12, starting at 10 a.m.
Leader: Dave and Suzy Gallup (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!



DECEMBER HOLIDAYS MEETING

Wednesday, December 15, at 7:30 p.m.
Springfield Science Museum, Tolman Auditorium
Presenters: You!
Emcee: Nancy Condon (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 photo album. Presentations may be no longer than 10 minutes in length. This year we are trying something new, called "What IS That?" One table will be dedicated to objects or pictures you bring for display that you have questions about. We'll see if we can get other club members to figure it out, using the group's combined wisdom to answer some of your nagging nature questions. Or, bring artifacts or natural treasures to show off in the nature displays, even if you know exactly what they are.

Part of the fun, too, is sharing each other's wonderful holiday treats. Bring a holiday dessert to share during social hour. Let's celebrate the holidays together! Please call Nancy to get on the roster for presentations.

Fannie Stebbins Memorial Wildlife Refuge, Longmeadow
Thursday, December 16, at 9:30 a.m.
Leader: Colette Potter (786-1805)

Longmeadow Flats, along the Connecticut River, encompasses the largest and highest-quality patch of floodplain forest known in Massachusetts. The extensive acreage of Fannie Stebbins Memorial Wildlife Refuge, favorite haunt of local naturalists, forms part of the Longmeadow

Flats. Foot trails meander throughout the refuge, traversing fields, meadows, and woods, skirting around marshland and alongside the river ~ leading through a variety of habitats sheltering a number of rare species of birds, insects, plants, and reptiles. Walk about with a group of experienced observers to see what's out today, as late autumn transitions to winter. Please call to register and for meeting place. Bad weather cancels.

THE NATURALISTS' CLUB

2010

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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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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*



FROM THE TREASURER

The fall of the year is the traditional time to renew membership in the Club. Those of you with a "10-11" (or later) on your newsletter mailing label are paid up for (at least) the coming year. Otherwise, your dues are owed for the year starting September 2010. You may renew by sending a check (payable to The Naturalists' Club) to Dave Lovejoy, Department of Biology, Westfield State University, Westfield, MA 01086 or by giving the check to Dave at the next monthly meeting.

Please note: Dave Lovejoy maintains the Naturalists' Club mailing list. Please direct changes or inquiries 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

Laughing Brook, Hampden

Unless otherwise noted, these programs will be held at Laughing Brook, located on Main Street in Hampden. October 16 and November 20 are programs for the whole family; the others are geared for adults. Call Mass Audubon 800-710-4550 for registration and information. A member/nonmember fee is charged. You may call Kevin Kopchynski with any questions (267-4757).

Witches Hats, Traveling Critters and Fall Colors

Saturday, October 16, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.
Family program with Kevin

Basic Nature Photography

Sundays, October 17 and 24, from 1 to 5 p.m.
at Laughing Brook and Hampden Town Hall, with Kevin

Stories of the Land

Saturday, November 13, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., with Kevin

Turkey Family Program

Saturday, November 20, from 10 to 11:30 a.m., with Kevin

Winter Tree Walk

Saturday, December 4, from 10 a.m. to noon, with Patti Steinman

BECOME A CLUB MEMBER OR
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR

2010-2011

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.