



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

# THE NATURALISTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

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

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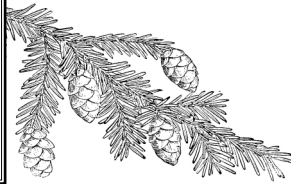
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## OCTOBER *to* DECEMBER SCHEDULE *of* ACTIVITIES

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<b>OCTOBER</b>	7	Sunday	Connecticut River Canoe Trip ~ A River Recovers, Stage 5: <i>Holyoke to West Springfield</i> (10 miles)
	10	Wednesday*	OCTOBER BANQUET MEETING, Munich Haus Restaurant, <i>Chicopee</i> Believe It or Not: Science in the Age of Misinformation
	13	Saturday	Benedict Pond, Beartown State Forest, <i>Monterey</i>
	18	Thursday	Fannie Stebbins Memorial Wildlife Refuge, <i>Longmeadow</i>
	20	Saturday	Paddle the Swift River, <i>Ware/Belchertown</i>
	27	Saturday	Lost Towns of the Quabbin: A Natural History and Historic Field Trip, <i>Hardwick</i>
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	3	Saturday	Abandoned Hill Farm Community Field Trip
	10	Saturday	Hiking the Holyoke Range, <i>Amherst</i>
	14	Wednesday*	NOVEMBER MEETING: Yellowstone, from Winter to Spring
	17	Saturday	Upper Goose Pond Ramble, <i>Lee</i>
	29	Thursday	Fall Day at Mittineague Park, <i>West Springfield</i>
<b>DECEMBER</b>	1	Saturday	Quabbin Reservation: Gate 30 ~ Rattlesnake Hill, <i>Orange</i>
	8	Saturday	Annual Late Fall Quabbin Hike, <i>New Salem</i>
	15	Saturday	An Evening with Naturalists, <i>Hampden</i>
	19	Wednesday	DECEMBER HOLIDAY MEETING
	22	Saturday	Chesterfield Gorge and the East Branch Trail, <i>Chesterfield</i>
	27	Thursday	Forest Park Ramble, <i>Springfield</i>

\*Note: October and November Naturalists' Club meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of the month.



## My Hemlock

I like my hemlock. It lords over my backyard, sentinel to the hemlock forest beyond. My hemlock is the most majestic eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) I have ever seen. I cannot quite touch my fingertips together when hugging my tree. The lower limbs emanate downward from the trunk, then take an elegant swoop upward. Each limb bears needle-laden branches hanging down like fringe. With increasing height, limbs get shorter, each reaching skyward, giving my tree a stately, conical shape. In winter the lower branches, laden with snow, lay right down on the ground, demonstrating resiliency in a way only a snowbelt tree can. When I come by to sweep away the snow, the limber branch springs back, relieved of its burden, none the worse for wear.

I've seen robins, hummingbirds, nuthatches, woodpeckers, and many other birds visit or roost in my hemlock, not to mention a barred owl and a screech owl. I really like my tree, but now I fear for its life.

About six years ago I spotted the tell-tale white woolly exudate from a nasty hemlock predator, the hemlock woolly adelgid, on a tree by our driveway. My husband quickly took it down to reduce chances of any spread. We monitored neighboring trees and found no further infestation. Crisis averted. Even years later, all our backyard hemlocks looked fine, until this year.

Now every single hemlock I've checked on my property has white cottony tufts at the base of the needles, even my majestic guardian of the woods. As the summer has progressed, I've witnessed my tree defoliating, looking more and more barren, less and less robust. It has been a trying summer with very little rain, putting additional stress on my hemlock. Will my tree make it?

Hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*) is an aphid-like insect. Well known in Asia, it was discovered in the US as early as 1907 in Washington State. Not until 1951 did it show up in the East, near Richmond, Virginia. This eastern strain has been traced to a lineage directly from Japan, distinct from our western strain. Since 1951 the adelgid has spread fairly unabated, covering more than half the eastern hemlock's native range of Maine to Georgia, including the whole of Massachusetts. Carolina hemlock, a tree of the southern Appalachians, is also falling victim to the adelgid.

Although the western lineage of adelgid has predators that keep it in check, this eastern type does not. Tree and insect evolved isolated from one another; consequently, the tree has developed no defenses against the insect. Although hemlocks set in motion defenses against chewing insects, the adelgid pierces through plant tissues and sucks out stored nutrients, an insult to which the tree has no resistance. This process also induces reactions in the tree, affecting the tree's ability to transport water, a perilous state intensified in our current drought conditions.

The most tell-tale sign of the adelgid pest is the cottony white exudate, usually seen on the underside of the foliage at the base of needles, a substance the adelgid produce to protect themselves and their eggs from drying out. The adelgid insect itself is brown to black and only  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch (1.5 mm) long.

For treatment, there are insecticides that can be injected directly into the trunk or roots of a tree. Also, insecticidal soaps can be sprayed directly on a tree, but to be effective it has to be thorough, covering each insect. Obviously, these measures can't save a forest. The best hope lies in natural predators released into infested areas. Several beetles are good contenders, some from Japan, one from China, and one from the western U.S. A good candidate is one that eats only hemlock woolly adelgid and nothing else.

Recently, I went for a walk at a lower elevation in Stanley Park in Westfield, examining hemlocks along a stream. I didn't see nearly the infestation I saw up on my mountain abode ~ a couple tufts here and one there (I picked them off and ground them into the dirt), but most trees were clean. Hemlocks are, among conifers, the most susceptible to drought, and this summer has been a dry one. I'm thinking Stanley Park's riverside trees have not been stressed to the extent my mountaintop trees have. My trees are in a weaker, more vulnerable state, which has allowed the adelgid to gain a foothold. In earlier years cold winters kept the adelgid at bay, but temperatures this past winter did not present much of a deterrent. Also, scientists have found that over time the adelgid seems able to withstand colder temperatures, allowing it to creep ever northward.

I like my hemlock. But what will become of it? Plants can manufacture some pretty intense insecticides. Someday, this predator/prey dance will come into balance, when hemlocks can deter this pest themselves. But will that be in time for my tree? Not likely. Yet in the meantime, hopefully my tree will demonstrate some of its winter resilience, finding a way to spring back when relieved of its burden, none the worse for wear.

~\*~ Nancy Condon ~\*~

## OCTOBER

### Connecticut River Canoe Trip ~ A River Recovers,

Stage 5: *Holyoke to West Springfield* (10 miles)

Sunday, October 7, from 9 a.m. till 4 p.m.

**Leaders:** Tom and Nancy Condon (413-564-0895)

**Registration:** Please call to register, so if bad weather forces cancellation we can contact you.

**Meeting Place:** Barnes & Noble parking lot in Holyoke

Traveling through the cities of Holyoke and Springfield may not sound very appealing; however, you will be surprised how pleasant this stretch of river is. This stage of the journey starts below the Holyoke dam, site of America's first planned city.

The current here is swift yet uncomplicated by rocks so we will get a nice boost. We will then paddle south between the dikes of Holyoke and Chicopee. Nearing the city of Springfield, the current slows as we lazily approach the skyscrapers and bridges of the city. We'll be taking out at the Thomas A. Lagodich Riverfront Park in West Springfield.

Call ahead to reserve your space. We have canoes and all the gear needed, for a mere \$5 per person charge, if you are without. Dress for the weather. Bring a lunch and plenty of water to drink.

### OCTOBER BANQUET MEETING MUNICH HAUS RESTAURANT

13 Center Street, Chicopee  
Wednesday, October 10, starting at 6 p.m.

☛ **Second Wednesday in October** ☚

*Directions to the Munich Haus: Traveling on I-91 to I-391, take the first exit (Chicopee Center). Turn right 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! (413-594-8788; [www.munichhaus.com](http://www.munichhaus.com))*

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! The after-dinner guest speaker will be Richard Sanderson, curator of Physical Science at the Springfield Science Museum, slated to give a talk about science in the age of misinformation.

At this banquet the Naturalists' Club Environmentalist of the Year award will be presented to Nancy and Tom Condon, well-known to many club members through the years for their dedicated roles in the Naturalists' Club and elsewhere, in particular for sharing their love of the great outdoors, leading folks on ventures downstream or paddling round a pond, hiking uphill for the vista or paying close attention to surroundings while traversing a trail, looking up in the sky or down into cool, dark caves, and elsewhere in between ~ just all round imparting a sense of adventure, inviting others to join in, come along and deepen in their own appreciation of nature. This banquet meeting will give folks a chance to recognize Tom and Nancy Condon in their diverse roles in the Naturalists' Club as field trip leaders, as mentors, board members, as well as being active in other outdoor-oriented organizations. So we hope you'll join us to support and honor Nancy and Tom as they receive this award. Personal testimonials are encouraged!

The evening will start off at a leisurely pace, with a social hour at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 7 and then Rich Sanderson's talk. The buffet menu sounds great and includes an offering of international cheeses and crackers, fresh fruit, chips and dips; salad, bread and 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 and tea. Cash bar throughout the evening. Cost is \$25.

Let's gather at the Munich Haus in Chicopee to acclaim the Condons' environmentalist spirit on the evening of the second Wednesday in October, the 10th. (*Please take note of a change from our usual third Wednesday!*) Reservation deadline is Friday, October 5. 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.

### **BELIEVE IT OR NOT: SCIENCE IN THE AGE OF MISINFORMATION**

Presenter: Richard Sanderson

We are fortunate to be alive during an amazing era of technology and exploration unlike any in history. Thanks to the Internet, we live in an age of information. Yet we also live in an age of deception and misinformation. Every day we are bombarded by news and information, not always accurate. Is the world really going to end on December 21, 2012? Richard Sanderson will discuss examples of misinformation, misconceptions and pseudoscience, focusing on recent news stories. He also will explain the characteristics of science and the fundamentals of critical thinking.

A long-time member of the Naturalists' Club, Rich co-authored the 2006 book *Illustrated Timeline of the Universe* and has helped organize over thirty astronomy conventions here in Western Massachusetts.

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

Saturday, October 13, from 9 a.m. till 2 p.m.

**Leader:** Bill Fontaine

**Registration:** Call Bill to register (413-533-2153)

**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 deciduous forest and a cattail marsh, and, consequently, 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.

**Fannie Stebbins Memorial Wildlife Refuge,**

*Longmeadow*

Thursday, October 18, starting at 8:30 a.m.

**Leader:** Colette Potter (413-786-1805)

Fannie Stebbins Memorial Wildlife Refuge's extensive acreage along the Connecticut River, favorite rendezvous of local naturalists, forms part of the Longmeadow Flats, the largest and highest-quality patch of floodplain forest known in Massachusetts. Meandering foot trails traverse fields, meadows, and woods, skirt around marshland and along the riverbanks and lead to a variety of habitats. Walk along with this group of experienced observers to see what's out on an early autumn day. Please call to register and for meeting place. Bad weather cancels.

**Paddle the Swift River, Ware/Belchertown**

Saturday, October 20, from 8 a.m. till about 12 p.m.

**Leaders:** Dick and Moreen Kardas (413-967-5739)

**Registration:** Call Dick or Moreen to sign up.

**Meeting Place:** Job Lot/Big Y Shopping Center, Route 32, Palmer: From I-90/Mass Pike Exit 8, Palmer, go left at traffic light onto Route 32 North. Take left at next traffic light into shopping center.

From the meeting spot we will caravan about a half hour to the red bridge over the Swift River, which forms the Ware/Belchertown town line: Old Belchertown Road is on the eastern, or Ware, side of the bridge; Cold Springs Road is on the western, or Belchertown, side of the bridge. We will put in at the red bridge and go south on the river to the Bondsville Dam (in the news on account of the state demanding it be repaired or removed). We'll then paddle back upstream to the red bridge, continue beyond the bridge to Cady Lane, then back to the red bridge. From the bridge to the dam and from the bridge to Cady Lane is about one hour each way.

The water in the river comes from the bottom of the Quabbin Reservoir and is very cold all year. The river is flat and paddling is generally easy. We'll probably see many fish, as the water is quite pristine. There is also an abundance of birdlife along the river. Bring your life jacket, lunch, drinks, camera, binoculars, hat, sunscreen, etc., and request nice weather.

**Lost Towns of the Quabbin: A Natural History and Historic Field Trip, Hardwick**

Saturday, October 27, starting at 9 a.m.

**Leader:** Dave Gallup (413-525-4697)

**Meeting Place:** Crystal Springs Plaza, Belchertown (intersection of Routes 9 and 202)

Join Dave Gallup on this hike as we step back to the 19th century to discover the once thriving community of Dana ~ one of the four towns lost when the area was flooded to form the Quabbin Reservoir. This all-day adventure has been expanded to include Enfield Lookout, overlooking Quabbin Reservoir; artifacts in Quabbin Cemetery from the four towns lost to the reservoir (Enfield, Prescott, Greenwich and Dana); and Hardwick, resembling what Dana looked like during the early 1900's. On a 2-mile walk (4 miles round trip) you will journey on an old road through the open forest, with stops along the way to explore the history and wildlife of the region. Once at Dana Commons you will examine the fascinating cellar holes, stone walls, sidewalks and streets of this town frozen in time. Dave has many surprises, including rare photographs of the beautiful Dana homes that stood here one hundred years ago, before they were ever dismantled.

Bring your lunch, beverage and a camera. Due to ecological concerns, this hike is limited to 25 participants. Don't miss this adventure!! *Rain Cancels!* Please call if you are coming!! We need numbers!

**Abandoned Hill Farm Community Field Trip**

Saturday, November 3, from 9:30 a.m. till early afternoon

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

**Registration:** Registration for this trip is required. Please call Dietrich in advance.

**Meeting Place:** We will meet at the tennis courts in Stanley Park (Western Ave.) in Westfield, opposite Westfield State University. From Stanley Park we'll carpool to the location, approximately 10 minutes away.

Dietrich Schlobohm, an environmental historian, will be our guide for an exploration of an abandoned farm community. During this 2-mile walk participants will examine several abandoned farm sites and gain a better understanding of land use change and how earlier Americans lived. By using history, nature, and our imagination we can share in the fun of discovery and gain insights into the lives of those who came before us.

As we begin our walk, there is an initial moderately steep climb of 5 to 10 minutes, but after that the pace will be casual and on level ground. Be sure to bring along water and lunch. Proper footwear is a must.

## NOVEMBER

### Hiking the Holyoke Range, Amherst

Saturday, November 10, starting at 10 a.m.

**Leaders:** Dave and Suzy Gallup (413-525-4697)

**Meeting Place:** Notch Visitors Center, Route 116, Amherst

Join us for a hike through the Holyoke Range on the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail, to the top of Mt. Norwotuck, the highest mountain on the range. Along the way we will talk about the geology and the forest surrounding us. After lunch on the summit of Norwotuck, we'll hike to the "Horse Caves," where we'll 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'll connect to the Robert Frost Trail on our hike back to the Visitor's Center. We'd suggest participants look up Shays' Rebellion on the Internet, at [www.encycarta.msn.com](http://www.encycarta.msn.com), and also bring along your favorite Robert Frost poem to read.

Please wear sturdy footwear for 3-mile moderately strenuous hike and bring along a snack/lunch and water. Call Dave for more information on meeting place.

### NOVEMBER MEETING

#### YELLOWSTONE, FROM WINTER TO SPRING

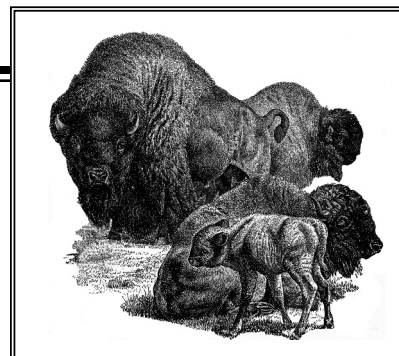
Wednesday, November 14, starting at 7:30 p.m.

← **Second Wednesday in November** →

Springfield Science Museum, Tolman Auditorium

Presenter: Sonya Vickers

*Bison:  
Bison bison*



The greater Yellowstone ecosystem is one of the largest intact temperate ecosystems on Earth today. Preserved as our nation's first national park, Yellowstone is recognized worldwide as unique in both its geology and its wildlife. This park is home to a herd of about 3,000 free-roaming bison and one of only a few areas where grizzly bears still range. Wolves, reintroduced in 1995, as well as the park's mountain lions, coyotes, golden eagles, and bears, are helping maintain a natural predator/prey balance with herds of hoofed grazing animals ~ elk, bison, pronghorn, deer, bighorn sheep, and moose. There are few other places where watching and photographing wildlife can be so exciting!

Wildlife is not the only thing to appreciate. We've all heard of the famous geyser Old Faithful. However, the park has another 300 geysers, the greatest concentration in the world, and 10,000 hydrothermal features (hot springs, steam vents, and mud pots) as well. All this hydrothermal activity arises from an encounter of snowmelt and rain, after slowly percolating through layers of permeable rock riddled with cracks, with a shallow source of magma, remnant of one of the largest volcanos ever to erupt on Earth, whose caldera, at 45 miles across, is so expansive it was unrecognizable as such till viewed by satellite.

Winter in the park is a special season of extremes: just picture deep snow surrounding scalding thermal features. Wildlife comes down into valleys where their behaviors are more easily observable. With spring's return, young have been birthed, so everything from bison calves to mountain sheep lambs to bear cubs may be sighted.

Sonya Vickers, onetime high school biology teacher, always a scientist and educator, tonight once again shines her light on another wonder of the world. Over the past decade Sonya has developed and led cultural and eco-tours ~ Galapagos/Machu Picchu, Australia, and Greece come to mind. She's gathering a group of folks to head to our own Yellowstone with her next spring, so consider tonight's presentation a preview.

### Upper Goose Pond Ramble, Lee

Saturday, November 17, from 10 a.m. till 3 p.m.

**Leaders:** Tom and Nancy Condon (413-564-0895)

**Meeting Place:** Trailhead pullout on Route 20 east of Mass Pike Exit 2

Join us for this mid-fall hike into the beautiful west end of Upper Goose Pond. We'll be following the Appalachian Trail from its intersection with Route 20 in Lee to the Upper Goose Pond Cabin and a bit beyond. Total distance is about 4 miles round trip. This includes the portion of the trail that passes over the Mass Pike. Our journey will start by skirting

the edge of Greenwater Pond, crossing the Pike on the footbridge, then ascending a small ridge. Once we cross the ridge, sounds of the hustle and bustle of everyday life fade into the distance. We pass through lovely forests until the view opens at Upper Goose Pond, where we'll stop and have lunch along the shores before returning along the same route.

Come prepared for inclement weather, but hope for a great fall day. Going is rough in a few places, so wear sturdy boots and bring along a pole if you like.

NOV – DEC

**Fall Day at Mittineague Park, West Springfield**

Thursday, November 29, starting at 9 a.m.

**Leader:** Colette Potter (413-786-1805)

Though by now frost may have left a first mark upon the landscape, Indian summer could lend a “summertime evermore” aura to this day. Shall we follow a shaded woods trail, perhaps stepping into the sunny meadow along the way, then stroll along the breezy river? Come on out, won't you, for an enjoyable ramble through this urban park. Call to register and for meeting place. Bad weather cancels.

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

*Orange*

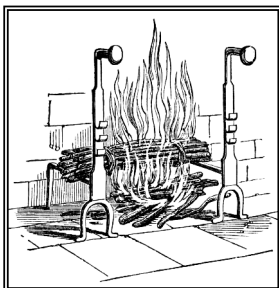
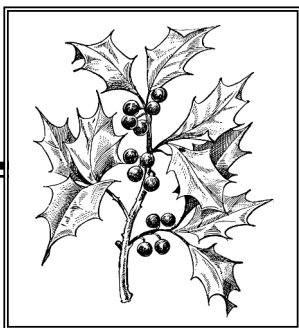
Saturday, December 1, from 10 a.m. till 2 p.m.

**Leader:** Bill Fontaine

**Registration:** Call Bill (413-533-2153)

**Meeting Place:** Florence Savings Bank parking lot at the Stop & Shop Plaza on Route 9 in Belchertown.

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



**Annual Late Fall Quabbin Hike, New Salem**

Saturday, December 8, starting at 10 a.m.

**Leaders:** Dave and Suzy Gallup (413-525-4697)

**Meeting Place:** Crystal Springs Plaza, near the junction of Routes 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 stone walls and farm sites. There is a chance of seeing eagles and perhaps hearing loons! We've found moose tracks on the sandy beaches of the reservoir. It's a great hike into one of the most beautiful areas to explore in our region. Bring your lunch, hot drinks, and binoculars.

Please dress appropriately for the weather and wear sturdy hiking shoes. If you arrive early at the meeting place, you may enjoy a hearty breakfast at Hawley's Restaurant. See you there! Please call to register. Rain cancels. *Call if you are coming!*

**An Evening with Naturalists, Hampden**

Saturday, December 15, starting at 7 p.m.

**Hostess:** Sonya Vickers (413-566-3406)

**Registration:** Please call for directions

Come join fellow naturalists on a winter's evening for conversation, food, drink, and the warmth of friendship around the fireplace. We'll be sharing desserts and refreshments, so let us know if you'd like to bring something along. Also, if you like, you can bring an object, picture or story you'd like to share with the others. Directions will be provided when you call to register. Extreme weather cancels.

**DECEMBER HOLIDAYS MEETING**

Wednesday, December 19, at 7:30 p.m.  
Springfield Science Museum, Tolman Auditorium

**Presenters:** You!

**Emcee:** 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 photo album. Presentations may be no longer than 10 minutes in length.

Also, contribute to the display of intriguing natural objects or pictures. Bring artifacts or natural treasures to show off in the nature display. Even if you don't know exactly what it is, bring it along and we'll see if we can get the group's combined wisdom to answer your nagging nature questions.

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

DECEMBER

In this final quarter two meetings will be switched from the third to the second Wednesday of the month:

First of all, a Naturalists' Club banquet is to be held the second Wednesday, October 10th. We'll be revisiting the Munich Haus Restaurant in downtown Chicopee. Please check the October 10th write-up for details and directions.

In November the third Wednesday is the day before Thanksgiving, so we've rescheduled that meeting also on the second Wednesday of the month, November 14.

This fall issue is being sent out early in order to give folks a chance to sign up in time to attend our early October banquet meeting, where the club will honor Nancy and Tom Condon as Environmentalists of the Year. Personal testimonials are encouraged!

Please take the opportunity to send in your reservations in plenty of time. Make note of these date changes on your calendars and plan on showing up! Here's looking forward to gathering together again at the change of seasons.

**Chesterfield Gorge and the East Branch Trail,**

*Chesterfield*

Saturday, December 22, from 9 a.m. till 4 p.m.

**Leaders:** Tom and Nancy Condon (413-564-0895)

**Meeting Place:** The Trustees of Reservations parking lot (or the 4-Seasons Club, just beyond, if we have already had snow)

Chesterfield Gorge is an outstanding example of erosion at its finest. Here the Westfield River rushes through a cut in half-billion year old rocks. Spectacular cascades have carved out and continue to sculpt this majestic gorge. Our hike will start at the gorge, then continue down the East Branch Trail. This old road and snowmobile trail winds its way along one of the prettiest sections of the Westfield River, a stretch designated as Wild and Scenic in 1993. We'll stroll along the river for a couple of miles and explore the history, geology, and scenic beauty of this exceptional river.

Bring a lunch, plenty of water, and dress for the weather. If an early winter is already upon us, we'll convert to a snowshoe hike. Bring along your own pair or call us to reserve one of ours.

**Forest Park Ramble, Springfield**

Thursday, December 27, starting at 9:30 a.m.

**Leader:** Colette Potter (413-786-1805)

Let's keep a warming pace as we head out into the first week of winter, walking along a few trails through this expansive park. Last call for 2012! Call to register and for meeting place. Bad weather cancels.

THIS day, Time winds th' exhausted chain; To run the twelvemonth's length again... ~ Robert Burns ~

**LAUGHING BROOK WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, Hampden**

These are Mass Audubon programs. Registration is required. Call 413-584-3009 (or 800-710-4550) to register by phone or to inquire further. Fees apply.

**Introduction to Digital Nature Photography**

Sundays, October 14 and 21, from 1 till 5 p.m.

**Instructor:** Kevin Kopchynski

**Fee:** \$20 Mass Audubon members/ \$25 nonmembers

Learn the basics of nature photography. We will discuss best practices for capturing the image, understanding exposure and focus, and using both manual and automatic exposure settings. Both digital and film users can benefit from this instruction, though when discussing equipment, we will concentrate on digital photography and the special opportunities and challenges it offers. After the first session, participants are encouraged to take photos for review at the second session.

Meet at the Melville Room, Hampden Town Hall, 625 Main Street, Hampden. Please enter using the back door and meet downstairs in the Melville Room. Please bring your camera and manual. We will be outdoors for part of the program unless there's inclement weather.

**Hiking the Neff Trail of Laughing Brook**

Sunday, November 4, from 1 till 4 p.m.

**Instructors:** Kevin Kopchynski and Patti Steinman

**Fee:** \$10 Mass Audubon members/ \$15 nonmembers

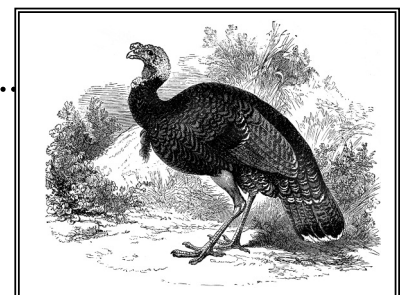
Come explore the Neff Trail at Laughing Brook. We'll walk a total of 4 miles, through mixed deciduous forest as well as a hemlock grove. Along the way we'll discuss the history of the area as can be seen from stone walls and trees, plus signs of wildlife. This is a beautiful trail often overlooked by visitors to Laughing Brook. Wear comfortable hiking shoes and bring water.

**Family Nature Hikes**

Although he was not born in Springfield, Thorton Burgess did live and work in Springfield for much of his career. He is very much "our" hometown naturalist. He was indeed a naturalist as much as an author. His observations and portrayals of nature were highly respected by leading scientists and conservationists of his day. Laughing Brook is the property where he lived and roamed during the years he wrote his famous nature stories.

Club member Kevin Kopchynski continues the tradition of nature education at Laughing Brook with a series of walks held the third Saturday of most months from 10 to 11:30 a.m. The walks are aimed at families with children; however, interested adults without children are welcomed. Each walk features a seasonal theme for the month, with an emphasis on inquiry and exploration. These are programs offered by Mass Audubon and require registration and a fee of \$3 for members and \$5 for nonmembers.

- October 20: Witches' Hats, Traveling Critters, and Fall Colors
- November 17: Turkey Day: Turkey Calls and other Turkey Treasures



Turkey:  
*Meleagris gallopavo*

# THE NATURALISTS' CLUB 2011 - 2012

## FROM THE TREASURER

Fall of the year is the traditional time to renew membership in the Club. Those of you with a "12-13" (or later) on your newsletter mailing label have paid for (at least) the coming year. Otherwise, your dues are owed for the year starting September 2012. 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.

*Note:* If your address and email address contact information have not changed, the form below need not be completed. We would, however, like your email address if you haven't sent it previously. *Also, Dave Lovejoy maintains the Naturalists' Club mailing list. Please direct any changes or inquiries to him.* Thanks.

## MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

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



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

- carpool to destinations
- share costs with your drive

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

## RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Comments or Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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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