



The

NATURALISTS' CLUB

NEWSLETTER

Springfield Science Museum at the Quadrangle, Springfield, Massachusetts

January to March

CALENDAR of EVENTS

January

- 5 Saturday Winter Snowshoeing or Hiking, *Belchertown*
- 12 Saturday Wildlife Tracking: Find & Follow the Signs, *Russell*
- 13 Sunday Snowshoe or Hike Along the Rail Trail, *Westfield*
- 16 Wednesday JANUARY MEETING: What Makes the Earth Special?
- 19 Saturday Winter Wildlife in Bear Hole, *West Springfield*
- 26 Saturday Sketching in the Greenhouse at Mount Holyoke, *Hadley*

February

- 9 Saturday A Winter Walk at Lewis Farm Bird Sanctuary, *Suffield, Connecticut*
- 17 Sunday Nature in Winter at Lunden Pond, *Monson*
- 20 Wednesday FEBRUARY MEETING: Ecosystems Need Dark Skies

March

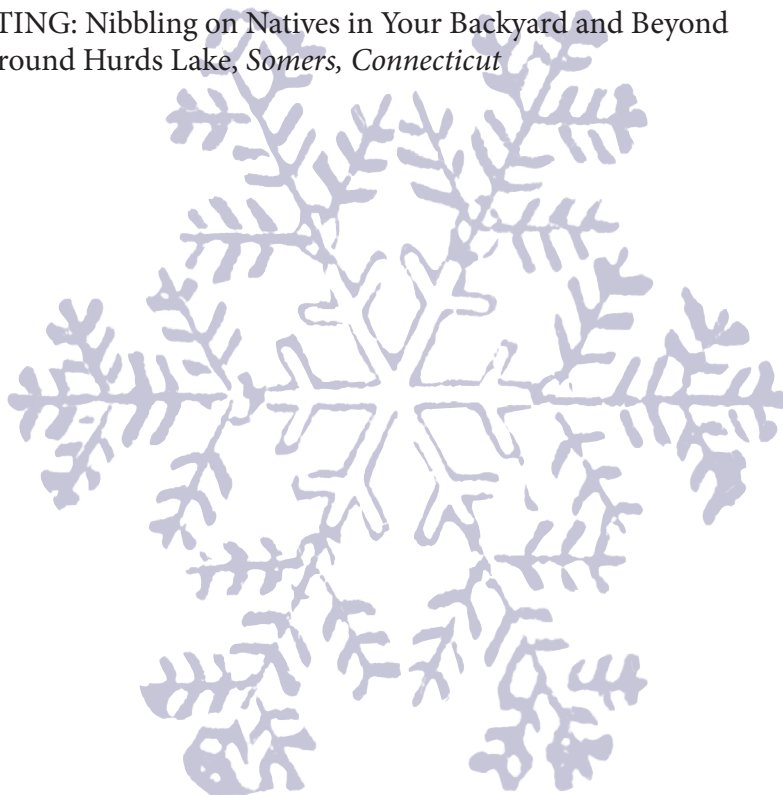
- 2 Saturday Star Party at Noble View, *Russell*
- 3 Sunday How Sweet It Is, *West Granville*
- 16 Saturday Sanderson Brook Falls, *Chester*
- 20 Wednesday MARCH MEETING: Nibbling on Natives in Your Backyard and Beyond
- 30 Saturday Spring Walk Around Hurds Lake, *Somers, Connecticut*



Groundhog Day - February 2

A snow day literally and figuratively falls from the sky—unbidden—and seems like a thing of wonder.

~ Susan Orlean



THE NATURALISTS' CLUB:

KEEPING A NEW ENGLAND TRADITION ALIVE FOR 50 YEARS



This June marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Naturalists' Club. During its 50 years, the Club has sustained the tradition of promoting natural history education. That tradition is deeply rooted in New England, where natural history clubs and societies have played a pivotal role in increasing public knowledge and appreciation of nature. New England was a leader in the initial formation of scientific and natural history societies. These organizations increased the world's store of knowledge and diffused this knowledge among the people.

In the autumn of 1859, four Springfield gentlemen met at the home of Mr. Daniel L. Harris. These men shared an interest in promoting natural history education. They might have formed the nucleus of a prestigious natural history society based in Springfield, but their efforts were aimed in a different direction. They organized the Springfield Ethnological and Natural History Museum. The Museum evolved into the splendid educational facility that we enjoy today, which serves as the location of our monthly meetings.

One hundred and ten years after these four gentleman formed what became the Springfield Science Museum, Ed Piela founded the Naturalists' Club on Earth Day, 1969. Today, our Club is a highly successful organization in which all fields of the natural sciences are pursued. Ed Piela often attributed the success of our Club to this holistic approach encompassing many areas of natural history.

The Naturalists' Club is the only general natural history club ever to form in Springfield. I think two of the key factors in our Club's survival are our continual embrace of new ideas and our willingness to work toward growth. The goals of our Club remain, as they were at its inception, to educate our members and the public about nature and to protect and preserve the environment.

The field of natural history offers infinite opportunities for challenge and fulfillment. The future of the Naturalists' Club is in the hands of the membership. By reaffirming our embrace of new ideas and growth in celebration of the Club's 50th anniversary, you will increase the chances that someday our Club will be celebrating its 100th!

~Richard Sanderson, who has been with the Naturalists' Club from the beginning, was our newsletter editor for many years.

I like spring, but it is too young.
I like summer, but it is too proud.
So I like best of all autumn,
because its tone is mellower,
its colors are richer, and it is
tinged with a little sorrow. Its
golden richness speaks not of
the innocence of spring, nor the
power of summer, but of the
mellowness and kindly wisdom
of approaching age. It knows the
limitations of life and its content.

~ Lin Yü-tang ~

Winter Snowshoeing or Hiking, Belchertown

Saturday, January 5, starting at 10:30 a.m.

Leaders: Dave and Suzy Gallup

Registration: Please call if you plan to come (413-525-4697)

Meeting Place: Crystal Springs Plaza, near junction of Routes 9 and 202, Belchertown

Join us for a snowshoe — or for a hike if there is no snow. Dave has many extra pairs of snowshoes, so let us know if you need a pair. We will explore an upland hardwood forest, then walk along old roads and trails. If there is snow, we may see tracks of deer, coyote, ruffed grouse, weasel, fisher, and many other species of animals and birds. Learn how these creatures survive in a cold, snow-covered landscape. We will see stone walls and foundations of farms long abandoned. Dress for the conditions, bring snacks or lunch, and don't forget your binoculars! Rain or bad weather cancels.

Winter Wildlife Tracking: Find & Follow the Signs,

Russell

Saturday, January 12, 10 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. or 1 to 3:15 p.m.

Leader: Jim Pelletier

Registration: By January 8th, please contact Laura Stinnett (laura.stinnette@gmail.com or 413-454-3232)

Meeting Place: Noble View Outdoor Center, 635 South Quarter Road, Russell MA 01071

Join Berkshire Wildlife Tracker Jim Pelletier to gain insight on who is out and about at Noble View this winter.

Berkshire Wildlife Trackers are trained wildlife monitors who document wildlife activity. The information collected serves as a database to help decision makers protect wildlife and their habitats. Jim is a seasoned tracker and excellent guide. We'll spend a short time inside, then head outdoors. A laminated Animal Tracks ID card will be provided for a donation of \$10.00. We'll warm up with some hot chocolate after the hike. Offered in conjunction with the Noble View Education and Program Committee.

Snowshoe or Hike Along the Rail Trail, Westfield

Sunday, January 13, from 1 to 4 p.m.

Leaders: Tom & Nancy Condon

Registration: Nancy Condon 413-297-0778 or spiderwoman@russellma.net

Meeting Place: Rail Trail parking lot at Shaker Farms Country Club, 866 Shaker Road, Westfield.

Join us for a snowshoe or hike along the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail. We'll travel the 2.4-mile section between Stop and Shop/Route 20 at the north and Shaker Farms Country Club at the south. We will run a car shuttle before the hike so we can go one way and end up in town to catch a hot chocolate or lunch when we finish. Let's hope there is snow, so bring along your hiking poles and snowshoes. Don't have snowshoes? We have a few pairs to lend out. Give us a call to sign up. We'll do the trip even if there is no snow, but not if it's raining.

Every mile is two in winter. ~ George Hebert

JAN.
Meeting

What Makes the Earth Special?

Wednesday, January 16, 2019, starting at 7 p.m.

Tolman Auditorium, Springfield Science Museum

Speaker: Jack Megas

This PowerPoint presentation is based on the Naturalist's Corner summer article of the same title. We will explore the unique characteristics that have made our planet what it is today. Speaker Jack Megas is a planetarium educator and co-founder of The Conjunction, an annual astronomy convention now in its 36th year.



Winter Wildlife in Bear Hole, West Springfield

Saturday, January 19, from 10 a.m. to noon

Leader: Dietrich Schlobohm

Registration: To register, please call Dietrich (413-788-4125).

Trip is limited to 20 people

Meeting Place: Meet at the intersection of Morgan Road and Prospect Ave in West Springfield. Access Morgan Road directly opposite the Riverdale Shopping Center on Rte. 5. Take Morgan Road until it goes under the Mass Turnpike and comes to an end at Prospect Ave. The last part of Morgan is a dirt road. There are 3 forks along Morgan which require your attention.

Winter. A time when nature supposedly slows down and creatures large and small seek shelter from the harsh elements. While many animals are less visible, winter actually provides us with a unique opportunity to study wildlife from a different perspective. Dietrich Schlobohm, an environmental historian, will lead us on a journey of winter discovery, especially if Mother Nature blesses us with a blanket of snow. Depending on weather conditions and the area we visit, there is the possibility of observing a wide variety of animal life including deer, otter, beaver, fox, coyote, and perhaps even the elusive fisher. Our observations will most probably not involve actual sightings but rather the tracks and other signs these animals leave behind as they engage in their daily struggle for survival. Be sure to dress for the weather including good footwear. Bring water and a snack.

Sketching in the Greenhouse at Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley

Saturday January 26, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Leader: Sonya Vickers

Registration: Please call Sonya at 413-218-7742 (Home phone, 413-566-3406, may not be connected)

Meeting Place: The greenhouse at Mount Holyoke College

Can you imagine being immersed in green leaves in January? Bring a sketchbook and join the group to learn about the plants there by observing them carefully enough to sketch them. No art talent needed, just your eyes and some simple drawing tools. Plan on sticking to simple materials, such as a sketch book plus colored pencils or a small watercolor set. Start your own nature journal or continue one you have worked on before. Sonya will provide examples of some nature journals and offer hints on how to proceed. Be sure to let Sonya know that you'll attend so the College will know how many to expect. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated

A Winter Walk at Lewis Farm Bird Sanctuary, Suffield, Connecticut

Saturday, February 9

Leader: Carole Dupont

Registration: Please contact Carole (carole0136@gmail.com; 413-896-0124)

Lewis Farm Bird Sanctuary is a 90-acre former farmland that has reverted to woodland over the past four to five decades. This will be a meandering hike along the well-blazed forested trails crossing several bridges over streams emerging from the wetlands and from a small pond.

Edward Alexander Bergstrom played a key role in helping the Hartford Audubon Society to obtain and conserve this tract as a bird sanctuary. His role in preserving this property is recognized with a plaque on a boulder at the edge of the parking area. He was also an active bird bander, banding a total of over 35,000 birds in his lifetime, many of them in his own yard. In his conservation work, he advocated protection of undeveloped open spaces near where people live. A light coating of snow would give us an opportunity to track wildlife activity; a heavier snow would necessitate snowshoes. Poles and proper footgear are recommended if icy conditions prevail. Bring along water, snacks and dress for the weather.

Nature in Winter at Lunden Pond, Monson

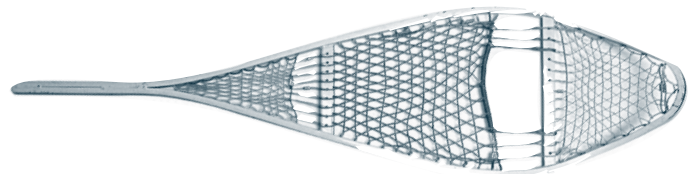
Sunday, February 17, starting at 10:30 a.m.

Leaders: Dave and Suzy Gallup

Registration: Please us call if you are coming (413-525-4697)

Meeting Place: Burlington Coat Factory Shopping Mall at Allen and Cooley Streets, Springfield

Join us for a hike or snowshoe at Lunden Pond, a Trustees of Reservations property. We will explore aquatic sites where there has been beaver activity for many years. From the pond itself, we'll continue along the trail into a beautiful forest and a fast-running brook, where wildlife and birds live among the hardwoods and hemlock. The hike is about a 3 mile loop – you will love it!



No one can look at a pine tree in winter without knowing
that spring will come again in due time. ~ Frank Bolles



Ecosystems Need Dark Skies

Wednesday, February 20, starting at 7 p.m.
Tolman Auditorium, Springfield Science Museum
Speaker: Dr. James Lowenthal

Plants and animals depend on Earth's daily cycle of light and dark to govern life-sustaining behaviors such as reproduction, nourishment, sleep and protection from predators. Humans too, need the natural day/night cycle for good health. A growing number of scientists, advocates and conservationists say the naturally dark sky should be protected as a valuable resource that helps keep humans connected to their shared history through the stars. Protecting the dark sky also aids plants, animals, and insects.

Dr. Lowenthal is a professor of astronomy at Smith College, Northampton. He is the Vice President of the American Astronomical Society and within the AAS sits on the Committee on Light Pollution, Radio Interference, and Space Debris. This evening's presentation will center around light pollution, how it affects life and on practical ways we can minimize it for energy conservation and better health.

Star Party at Noble View, Russell

Saturday, March 2, from 6:30 to 9 p.m.
Leaders: The Stars Club, Tom and Nancy Condon (413-297-0778), and Laura Stinnett
Registration: by February 25, please contact Laura Stinnett (laura.stinnette@gmail.com, 413-454-3232)
Meeting Place: Appalachian Mountain Club's Noble View Outdoor Center: 635 South Quarter Road, Russell

Come on up to AMC's Noble View for an evening of star observation and storytelling. Cassiopeia, a mythological queen, dared compare her beauty to the gods. The hero Perseus slew the gorgon Medusa and turned the sea monster, Cetus, to stone before saving Cassiopeia's daughter, Andromeda, and flying off on the winged horse, Pegasus. These stories, told for centuries, are immortalized in the constellations.

We will not only explore these stories of old but also learn about the value of the night sky as a natural resource that is important to human health and the health of the natural environment. AMC is working in Maine toward the designation of 75,000 acres as a Dark Sky Reserve through the International Dark Sky Association. This would be only the second reserve in the US and tenth in the world. Bring along a chair, something warm to wrap up in, and your sense of adventure. There will also be an opportunity for a night hike. Overcast conditions would limit viewing but not storytelling, so let's gather unless there's very heavy snow or rain. The cottage and hot chocolate will be available for warming up. Offered in conjunction with the Noble View Education and Program Committee. \$5 donation requested.

How Sweet It Is! Sugaring Time at Maple Corner Farm, West Granville

Sunday, March 3, starting at 11:00 a.m.
Leaders: Dave and Suzy Gallup
Registration: Please call if you plan to come (413-525-4697)
Meeting Place: Westfield State University Commuter Parking Lot

It is once again the time of the year when we visit Maple Corner Farm in West Granville. This visit has become a Naturalists' Club tradition! The Ripley Farm has been in the family for over one hundred years. Enjoy breakfast or brunch with maple syrup from the Farm's maple forest. After eating, we will learn about the process and history of maple syrup production. Then, conditions permitting, we'll hike to the maple sugarbush (about one-mile round trip) to see how the sap is harvested. For ages 8 and up. Rain or bad weather cancels.

Sanderson Brook Falls, Chester

Saturday, March 16, from 10 a.m. to noon
Leaders: Tom and Nancy Condon (413-297-0778)
Registration: Call Tom or Nancy
Meeting Place: Sanderson Brook Falls parking lot, Route 20, Chester

Join us for a hike to one of the most beautiful waterfalls in Western Massachusetts. Sanderson Brook Falls is located in the Chester-Blandford State Forest in the foothills of the Berkshires. We will hike approximately 2 miles up a gentle rise on a road-wide path until we get to the falls. There we'll take a side trail to the rocky plunge pool at the bottom to get the full experience of the potentially ice-laden cascade. March can bring snow or it can bring the first wildflowers, so sturdy hiking boots, snow spikes, hiking poles or whatever the conditions warrant is recommended. Dress for the weather. Heavy rain cancels.



MAR. Meeting

Nibbling on Natives in Your Backyard and Beyond

Wednesday, March 20, starting at 7 p.m.

Tolman Auditorium, Springfield Science Museum

Speaker: Russ Cohen

There's increasing interest among homeowners, property managers and others to utilize native species in landscaping, thanks to books like Doug Tallamy's *Bringing Nature Home*, which extol the virtues of native plants over exotic ornamentals for attracting and sustaining beneficial insects. Yet, for some people, this alone may be insufficient motivation to "go native". Perhaps knowing that many native species are edible by people, too, will provide the incentive needed to add native species to your yard. Juneberries (*Amelanchier spp.*), for example, are edible by both animals and people. The taste of the ripe fruit is like a cross between cherries and almonds, related species from the Rose family.

Join Russ Cohen, expert forager and author of *Wild Plants I Have Known...and Eaten*, for a slide show featuring species of native edible wild plants suitable for adding to your own landscape or nibbling on as you encounter them in other locales. Keys for identification of each species will be provided, along with guidelines for safe and environmentally responsible foraging. Russ will also include a few details regarding native edible plants he has grown successfully from seed and partnerships he has made with conservation groups and others to add edible native plants to their landscapes. Russ will bring along samples of foraged goodies made from edible native species for people to taste.

Until his retirement in June of 2015, Russ Cohen served as Rivers Advocate for the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game's Division of Ecological Restoration. Now he has more time to pursue his passionate avocation: connecting to nature via his taste buds. Russ leads foraging walks and talks each year at venues throughout the Northeast and has taken on a role as a "Johnny Appleseed" of sorts for edible native species. He has set up a small nursery (in Weston, Mass.) where he grows plants that he propagates from seed, some of which he has collected himself.

Spring Walk Around Hurds Lake, Somers, Connecticut

Saturday, March 30

Leader: Carole Dupont

Registration: Please contact Carole (carole0136@gmail.com; 413-896-0124)

Camp Aya Po is located at the base of Perkin's Mountain on the shores of peaceful Hurds Lake which was known

as Lake Nissaski in the old camp days. We will walk around the lake and delight in the treasures of spring as we look for early wildflowers peeking out through the lifeless leftovers of winter. Hopefully, turtles, frogs & other wild life will also be out enjoying the warmer weather. Bring along water, snacks and dress for the weather. Binoculars & poles are also encouraged.

Spring Flower Shows

The Amherst Orchid Society Annual Show and Sale, Northampton

Saturday and Sunday, February 23 and 24

Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School, 80 Locust Street (Route 9, west of town), next to the Cooley Dickson Hospital. For further information, please visit <https://www.amherstorchidsociety.org>

Smith College Bulb Show, Northampton

Lyman Conservatory, 16 College Lane

Saturday, March 2 to Sunday, March 17, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays, plus 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekends. For further information about the show, please visit <http://www.smith.edu/garden/Home/events.html> or call (413-585-2740).

Mount Holyoke Annual Spring Flower Show, South Hadley

Talcott Greenhouse, MHC Botanic Garden

Saturday, March 2 to Sunday, March 17 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For further information, visit https://www.mtholyoke.edu/botanic/flower_show or call Talcott Greenhouse at (413-538-2116).



Butterfly orchid is the common name of *Oncidium papilio*. The flowers bloom in any season. The flowers are brown with bands of yellow.

The color of springtime is in the flowers; the color of winter is in the imagination ~ Terri Guillemets

Club Finances

In September 2002, Club dues for basic membership increased from \$10 to \$15 per year, where they remain today. At that time, we also introduced a new dues structure which offered supporting (\$25) and sustaining (\$50) membership levels.

This structure has benefited the Club as several dozen members have renewed at the supporting or sustaining level. However, the number of members has decreased in recent years, such that our mailings no longer qualify for bulk postage rate. This change has been partially offset by the decision of many members to receive the newsletter electronically. Still, rising costs are evident in other areas. We pay to rent to Tolman Auditorium, purchase postage for the newsletter, and pay speaker fees. (Board members who present programs are not compensated.) These costs have placed a strain on Club finances.

Earlier this year, to support our operating expenses, we withdrew \$1000 for operating expenses from the Dorothy Anne Wheat and Phyllis Wheat Smith Naturalists' Funds, which are administered by the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts. We prefer not to make such withdrawals so that we can use all the interest from the funds for disbursements to various environmental causes, in keeping with the Club's mission.

Although the Board may ultimately find it necessary to raise dues, we are not doing so at this time. We will, however, update our currently lenient policy of mailing newsletters to members who have not renewed for the current year. Previously, members who did not renew in September received three more newsletters (Oct-Dec, Jan-Mar, Apr-Jun) before receiving a renewal letter. With the change, the present newsletter is the last you will receive. Please check the renewal information on the label or in the email message for those receiving the newsletter electronically (18-19 or later indicates you are current with dues), and please renew soon if dues are owed.

Donations *Donations from the Phyllis Wheat Smith and Dorothy Anne Wheat Naturalists' Funds, administered by the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts*

The Naturalists' Club is happy to announce our 2018 donations from the Phyllis Wheat Smith Naturalists' Fund and the Dorothy Anne Wheat Naturalists' Fund. Both Smith and Wheat bequeathed to us very generous donations from their respective estates. We have used interest earned from these funds to make donations to the following causes and organizations, which reflect our club's mission to promote knowledge, appreciation, and preservation of our natural environment:

1. The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance – Defending and protecting over nine million acres of red rock wilderness: \$500
2. Bronx Zoo Wildlife Conservation Fund – Saving the Elephants in East Africa: \$500
3. Re-Green Springfield – planting trees and restoring the Forest Park Arboretum: \$1,000
4. The Trustees of Reservations – preserving land in Massachusetts: \$1,000
5. West Springfield Environmental Committee for Student Environmental Education (SEEC): \$2,000
6. Tom Ricardi Wildlife Rehabilitation Birds of Prey: \$1,000
7. The Kestrel Foundation – land protection: \$1,000
8. Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Mass Audubon: \$1,000
9. The Buzz Hoagland Student Research Award, Westfield State University: \$1,000

Events at Laughing Brook Wildlife Sanctuary

These events are sponsored by Connecticut River Valley Sanctuaries and Laughing Brook Wildlife Sanctuary.

Tracking & Animal Signs at Laughing Brook, Hampden

Saturday, January 19, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Saturday, February 16, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Location: Laughing Brook, 793 Main Street, Hampden

Instructor: Kevin Kopchynski, Photographer/Naturalist

Registration: Call 413-584-3009, or visit massaudubon.org.

At one time, being able to read tracks was vital for survival. Tracking is more than simply finding a trail and following it, and prints aren't always necessary to track an animal. The forest is full of signs that tell us about the wildlife within. Learn to read the tracks and signs left by animals that live in our area. Suitable for children ages 5 - 18, and for adults. MassAudubon members \$5; nonmembers \$7

Spring at Laughing Brook, Hampden

Saturday, March 16, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Location: Laughing Brook, 793 Main Street, Hampden

Instructor: Kevin Kopchynski, Photographer/Naturalist

Registration: Call 413-584-3009, or visit massaudubon.org.

According to the calendar, spring is just a few days away. However, the observant outdoor nature detective has likely noticed evidence of the new season for weeks. By this time of year, early arriving species such as red-winged blackbirds and turkey vultures have returned to our area. Join us as we look for other harbingers of spring: skunk cabbage poking its leaves from beneath the snow or soil (and warming the surrounding ground); lightening bugs and other spring insects; and perhaps even early frogs. MassAudubon members \$5; nonmembers \$7.

FROM THE TREASURER

Those with a date of "18-19" (or later) on your newsletter mailing label have paid for this year. Otherwise, your dues are owed for the year that started in September 2018. You may renew by sending a check (payable to The Naturalists' Club) to Dave Lovejoy, Westfield State University, Department of Biology, Westfield, MA 01086 or by giving the check to Dave at the next monthly meeting.

Note: If your contact information has not changed, the form below need not be completed. We would, however, like to have your email address if you haven't sent it previously. Please direct changes or inquiries to Dave Lovejoy, who maintains our mailing list. And please let Dave know if you would like to receive your newsletter electronically.

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

Reminder

To receive electronic updates, please send us your email address

On occasion, information of interest to club members becomes available after our Newsletter has gone to press. Such information can include, for example, changes in speakers for upcoming meetings and late-breaking trip announcements. If you'd like to receive these electronic updates, please be sure to share your email address with Dave Lovejoy (dlovejoy@westfield.ma.edu), who maintains the Club membership list.

Renew your membership

Name

Address

Phone Number Email

Requests for programs/trips



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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