



The
NATURALISTS' CLUB
 N E W S L E T T E R

Springfield Science Museum at the Quadrangle, Springfield, Massachusetts

October to December

OCTOBER

- 2 Sunday **Swift River Paddle, Belchertown**
 8 Saturday **Quabbin Hike, New Salem**
 12 Wednesday **Holyoke Heritage State Park Tree Trek, Holyoke**
 19 Wednesday **OCTOBER MEETING: History and Flora of Springfield's Forest Park**
 23 Sunday **A Hike at Horse Mountain, Williamsburg**

NOVEMBER

- 6 Sunday **Hike at Bray Lake, Holyoke**
 12 Saturday **Hike at Julian's Bower, Shutesbury**
 13 Sunday **Fire Towers and Funerals, Chester**
 16 Wednesday **NOVEMBER MEETING: The French Alps & Beyond**
 19 Saturday **Ludlow Reservoir, Ludlow**
 20 Sunday **Holyoke Range State Park, Amherst/Granby**
 26 Saturday **Hike Away Your Thanksgiving Meal (Say goodbye to the pie), Monson**

DECEMBER

- 3 Saturday **Annual Late Fall Hike at the Quabbin, Belchertown**
 10 Saturday **Haystack Mountain Hike, Norfolk, Connecticut**
 17 Saturday **An Evening with Naturalists, Wilbraham**
 21 Wednesday **DECEMBER HOLIDAY MEETING**



NATURALIST'S CORNER

ROCKS FROM SPACE

The Springfield Science Museum's Astronomy Hall is home to a magnificent 290-pound black iron and nickel meteorite that was found near the Barringer Crater in northern Arizona. To most visitors, this rock — a melted meteorite — is the stereotypical rock from space.

The great majority of space rocks come from the Asteroid Belt, some 200 million miles away from Earth, between Mars and Jupiter. The parent bodies of space rocks are some 600,000 asteroids that, together, are no larger than 1/3 the size of our Moon. The rocks are relatively stable, but huge Jupiter occasionally sends some our way.

There are two main types of meteorites: melted or unchanged. Melted meteorites formed in asteroids that were differentiated by radioactive melting, volcanism, and collisions. Among the melted meteorites, iron and nickel ones (including the 290-pound one in Astronomy Hall) come from cores of asteroids; beautiful silicate and iron ones from the mantles of asteroids; and soil-like ones, called achondrites (Greek: *without seeds*), from the upper mantles and crusts.

The other kind of asteroids — meteorites relatively unchanged from the early solar system, some four and a half billion years ago — represent 85% of all space rocks. They are called chondrites, due to their seed-like inclusions, and they look a lot like many rocks here on Earth. These small particles are older than our planet and were formed in the early solar nebula. A few are even older than the Sun and were created in supernova explosions of older stars! One very rare type of chondrite contains carbon and looks like charcoal, but surprisingly, it has many of the amino acids, and even water — features that are associated with life on our planet.

An impact four and a half billion years ago radically transformed our planet. An object half the size of Earth itself struck with a glancing blow, temporarily forming a ring around Earth. The ring gravitationally formed the Moon, which is moving away from us at a rate of roughly one and a quarter inches a year. The impact knocked Earth off an upright stance to its current axis of 23.5 degrees, giving us our four seasons. The impactor's iron core merged with our own, allowing Earth to have a very large magnetic field that makes an atmosphere, liquid water, and even the aurora possible. Much more recently, just sixty-six million years ago, the dinosaurs and three-quarters of all species went extinct due to the catastrophic impact of a giant space rock, clearing the way for the rise of mammals.

Our fate is truly connected to rocks from space.

~Jack Megas

Earth is a small town with many neighborhoods in a very big universe.

~Ron Garan

2022 OCTOBER to DECEMBER

Swift River Paddle, Belchertown

Sunday, October 2, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Leader: Tom Condon

Registration: Please contact Tom (413-454-2331 or science@condon.net)

Meeting Place: Big Y Parking Lot, Route 32 in Palmer

Join us for a late-season paddle on one of the prettiest rivers in Western Massachusetts. The water is cold and clear coming straight from the Quabbin Reservoir. We will paddle upriver against a steady current, enjoying riverside forests and birds and catching glimpses of the trout hiding in the weeds. We'll go as far as we can, then turn downriver, heading past our put-in to a large backwater where we can look for ducks and herons. Bring lunch, water, and dress for the weather. We have extra boats — just let us know if you would like to borrow one.

Not yesterday I learned to know
The love of bare November days
Before the coming of the snow,
But it were vain to tell her so,
And they are better for her praise.

~Robert Frost



Quabbin Hike, New Salem

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

Leaders: Please call Dave and Suzy Gallup to register (413-525-4697)

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

Join us for a wonderful October hike at the northwestern side of Quabbin (Gates 25-26), one of the area's most beautiful locations. From this northern edge of the reservoir, one can spot a string of small islands. We will make a loop along an old road through mixed hardwood forest with wonderful October foliage, traveling about 3 miles total. Bring a lunch or snack. After the hike, we can go into the town of New Salem — a wonderful little village that looks just as it did in the 19th century. From town, we will have the option to take an additional, short hike to some beautiful vistas that you will love! Then we will visit a farm and orchard in town for some wonderful hot apple cider. Rain cancels.

Holyoke Heritage Park Tree Trek, Holyoke

Wednesday, October 12, from 10 a.m. to noon

Meeting Place: Holyoke Heritage Park Visitor's Center

Holyoke Heritage park is home to 30 different tree species. Come join in for a guided stroll and learn about the many, varied gifts provided by these beneficial plants. If you wish, bring your cell phone and try out great tree identification apps. This event is open to visitors of all ages.

OCT
Meeting

OCTOBER MEETING: History and Flora of Springfield's Forest Park

Wednesday, October 19, starting at 7 p.m.

Tolman Auditorium, Springfield Science Museum

Speaker: Dave Lovejoy

Since the 1880s, Springfield residents and others have enjoyed picnicking, hiking and many other activities in this easily accessible park. Not surprisingly, the Park has seen many changes over the years in the types of recreation available, its physical appearance, and the species of plants found within its boundaries. Dave's recently published Flora of Forest Park includes much of the history of the Park and the changes in the flora. Tonight's presentation will cover this history and changing flora, enhanced by a large number of old and seldom seen images of the Park's early years.

A Hike at Horse Mountain, Williamsburg

Sunday, October 23, in the morning

Leader: Carole Dupont

Registration: Please contact Carole (413-896-0124; or carole0136@gmail.com) for meeting place and time

We'll take an easy hike along the Potash trail, with its mysterious circles, enjoying the colorful autumn foliage. We will climb up to the White Rock formation, where we will relax and snack while enjoying the spectacular, colorful view of the surrounding mountains and Connecticut River Valley. From there, we will hike back over the talus rock slope, past the bear clawed beeches, and along the edge of a beautiful shrub swamp of the Habitat Trail to the wooded forests along the Horse Mountain Trail, observing nature's magical transformation to winter. Bring your binoculars, water, snacks, good hiking boots, hiking poles and dress according to the weather conditions.

Is not this a true autumn day?
Just the still melancholy that I
love that makes life and nature
harmonize.

~George Eliot

A Hike at Bray Lake, Holyoke

Sunday November 6, starting at 10 a.m.

Leader: Sonya Vickers

Registration: Please call Sonya (413-218-7742)

Meeting place: West Springfield Shops in the Table & Vine parking lot

This 1.9-mile loop is a scenic walk through a hemlock forest on the south side of Mount Tom. We will be walking over the lava flow that occurred during the Triassic period, the source of basalt that all our roads are paved with in this area. We will circle Bray Lake and see signs of beaver and other wildlife. The trail has some moderate hills and lots of tree roots, so you may want to bring walking sticks.

Hike at Julian's Bower, Shutesbury

Saturday, November 12, in the morning

Leader: Carole Dupont

Registration: Please contact Carole (413-896-0124 or carole0136@gmail.com) for meeting place and time

We will view interesting sculptures designed by renowned local artist and landowner Julian Janowitz as we hike recreational trails that Janowitz designed himself, including an 860-foot boardwalk that enables visitors to traverse a 2-acre bog. Like children, we will delight in walking through Julian's magical red door creation. We will strike the gong to announce our presence, then listen as it resonates through the forest. As we stroll, we can enjoy reading Julian's poetry, tacked to trees along the trails. We will cross over bridges in Julian's fantasy world, walk along Ames Pond, then sit to enjoy our snacks. A truly unusual and fascinating hike to transform us into winter mode. Bring your binoculars, water, snacks, good hiking boots, hiking poles, and dress according to the weather conditions.

Fire Towers and Funerals, Chester

Sunday, November 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Leader: Tom Condon

Registration: Please contact Tom (413-454-2331; or science@condon.net)

Meeting Place: Chester Elementary School

Chester advertises itself as the "Gem of the Valley", perhaps as a nod to its mining history, but the area has plenty of natural gems, too. This adventure will take us to two of them. First, we'll hike to the peak of Gobble Mountain, a Nature Conservancy Preserve. At 1657 feet, the peak offers stunning views of the Westfield River Valley and surrounding hills. The trail is just over one mile, along an old access road. In places, the road is steep and rocky, so wear your best boots and bring along your poles. But fear not — we'll take our time ascending the mountain to learn about the forest and the mining history of the area. We'll rest and enjoy the views at the summit.

After descending, we'll hop in our cars for a short drive to another gem of Chester: the tomb of Hiram Smith. Mr. Smith did not want to be buried in the earth. Instead, his tomb is carved into a glacial erratic. This walk is an easy half mile through a growing forest that was once the homestead of the dearly departed. Bring lunch, and prepare for the weather.

IN MEMORIAM

Our layout and graphic artist, Loren K. Hoffman of Waldoboro, Maine, passed away peacefully on the evening of July 26, 2022 at Maine Medical Center. Loren was born in Newark, New Jersey on September 23, 1949. She attended Moore College of Art and Design, where she earned a BFA in advertising art and graphic design in 1971. Following her graduation, Loren worked at several small agencies in the Hartford, Connecticut and Springfield, Massachusetts areas. In 1984, she was hired as an artist at the Hartford Life Insurance Company, then worked her way up to become art director. Loren later went to work for Metropolitan Life as a graphic artist. For over twenty years, up until her death, Loren contributed her expertise as the layout artist for the Naturalists' Club newsletter. Loren won numerous awards and accolades throughout her life during her professional career. She earned seven best-in-show awards and five awards of excellence from the Life Communication Association. Loren was a lively and enthusiastic storyteller and had a great sense of humor and a quick wit that was punctuated by her brilliant smile and gorgeous blue eyes. She loved the Naturalists' Club and working on the newsletter. We will miss her.



NOVEMBER MEETING: The French Alps & Beyond

Presented by Tom Condon

Wednesday, November 16, starting at 7 p.m.

Tolman Auditorium, Springfield Science Museum

The Mount Blanc massif straddles the borders of France, Italy, and Switzerland. Here, the human world and natural world collide. A path, the Tour du Mont Blanc, encircles the massif and provides visitors a glimpse into the high Alps. It was in these mountains that the word "alpine" was coined and where some of the very first insights into ecology were made. Plants and animals have evolved reproductive and growth strategies to survive in this unforgiving environment. But will these strategies help them continue to thrive in an everchanging world? We'll explore these mountains and the organisms that call them home. But we'll also go beyond the Alps to explore the caves of south central France. These are the famous painted caves of early man. Best depicted by Lascaux, these caves and rock shelters harbor man's earliest preserved true art. For what purpose were they made? Art? Religion? History? Tom Condon is a middle school science teacher and published author. His interest in the natural world has taken him to all 50 states and to countries on four continents. Join us as Tom describes his experiences on the Tour du Mont Blanc and his visits to the painted caves of France.

Ludlow Reservoir, Ludlow

Saturday, November 19

Leader: Sonya Vickers

Registration: Please call Sonya (413-218-7742) to register and for meeting time

Meeting Place: Big Y shopping center in Ludlow. From the Ludlow exit of the Mass Pike, turn left towards the Big Y parking lot on Rt 21. Turn right as you enter the lot, and park behind Berkshire Bank.

This very easy trail is paved and runs along the shoreline of Ludlow Reservoir. It is a favorite walking place even in the winter, because the path is plowed. As we walk through the forest, we will have nice views of the lake. It is always fun to stop at Randall's Farm on the way back.

Hiking Holyoke Range State Park, Amherst/Granby

Sunday, November 20th, starting at 10:30 a.m.

Leader: Dave Gallup (413-525-4697)

Registration: Please call Dave.

Meeting Place: Notch Visitor Center, Route 116

Join us for a hike on the New England Scenic Trail, exploring the forest and geology of the Holyoke Range. We will hike to the summit of Mt. Norwottuck where we can have lunch or snacks as we enjoy magnificent vistas! From there, we will hike to the fabled Horse Caves, where Daniel Shays retreated after his unsuccessful raid on the Springfield Armory in 1786. We will then hike back to the Visitor Center on the Robert Frost Trail. Bring some Frost poems to read if you like. This is about a 3-mile loop with some moderately strenuous spots. Wear sturdy footwear. Bring lunch and water.

Hike Away Your Thanksgiving Meal (Say goodbye to the pie), *Monson*

Sunday, November 28, starting at 10 a.m.

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

Meeting Place: In front of Burlington at the shopping mall, Allen and Cooley Streets, Springfield

Join us for this annual hike and walk off those calories from Thanksgiving dinner! We will hike to the summit of Peaked Mountain with its incredible vistas of the valley below. From the summit, you can see Mt. Monadnock in New Hampshire. We will hike some different trails. This is a moderately strenuous hike. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Sturdy hiking shoes are recommended, and don't forget your binoculars! Rain cancels.

Annual Late Fall Hike at the Quabbin, *Belchertown*

Sunday, December 3, starting at 10 a.m.

Leaders: Dave and Suzy Gallup

Registration: Please call Dave and Suzy (413-525-4697)

Meeting Place: CVS Plaza, near junction of Routes 9 and 202 in Belchertown

It is that time of the year again: a time to get together and share a late fall day. Our destination is Gate 13 or 15, offering a wonderful hike with great views of the northern section of the Quabbin, with many of stone walls and farm sites. There is some chance we will see eagles and hear loons! Previously, we've seen moose tracks on the Quabbin's sandy beaches. This is a great hike in one of the most beautiful areas to explore. Bring lunch, hot drinks, and binoculars. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy hiking boots. Rain cancels.

Haystack Mountain Hike, *Norfolk, Connecticut*

Saturday, December 10, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Leaders: Tom Condon

Registration: Please contact Tom (413 454-2331; or science@condon.net)

Meeting Place: Haystack Mountain State Park Entrance, North Street (Rt. 272) Norfolk, CT

A lonely tower sits atop this sentinel of a mountain in northwestern Connecticut. This stone tower was built as a war memorial. Today, it offers spectacular views across the western hills of Connecticut, into New York, north into Massachusetts and, on a clear day, as far as Vermont's Green Mountains. Most of our hike will be along the paved park road which at this time of the year is open only to foot traffic. The road sweeps by a lovely pond and then climbs to near the summit. We will stop for wildlife and to explore the geology of the area. The last half mile or so is along a narrow path, but the view is well worth the climb. Pack a lunch, water, and dress for the weather.

An Evening with Naturalists, *Wilbraham*

Saturday December 17 starting at 7pm

Hostess: RSVP to Sonya Vickers (413-218-7742)

Continuing the long tradition of our holiday party, Sonya again invites you to her home, where we can gather and share natural finds throughout this last year. She has a smaller home now, but everyone fit last year and she looks forward to a party again this year. Parking may be in a separate area so carpooling could be a good idea. Bring along a holiday treat to share with the group. You might also like to bring an object or picture you encountered this last year to share a story. Please call Sonya so she can give you directions to her new home.

Naturalists' Club Seeks Volunteer Graphic Designer

The Naturalists' Club seeks a volunteer with graphics experience to succeed Loren K. Hoffman, our longtime designer. Responsibilities include designing layout for each Newsletter issue, selecting open-source images, and setting text. Our Newsletter goes to press four times per year: late March, June, September, and December. Time demands of the designer role are greatest in the three weeks before publication. We currently use Adobe InDesign for production but are open to shifting to a different platform, depending on the designer's preferences. To learn more, please contact Diane Genereux at natclubnewsletter@gmail.com.

Naturalists' Club Seeks Volunteer Social Media Publicist

Do you post on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter? Would you be willing to post upcoming and past hikes, paddles and fun on The Naturalists' Club pages? The club needs a person who is willing and able to manage posts on social media platforms. It sure would help would-be members find out about the great things we do as a club. If you want to find out more or offer to help, please email Tom Condon at science@condon.net.



Holiday Meeting

Wednesday, December 21, starting at 7:00 p.m.
Springfield Science Museum, Tolman Auditorium
Presenters: You!
Emcee: Nancy Condon (413-297-0778)

Have you visited someplace you would recommend to others? Do you have photos of Naturalists' Club events from this year? We want to hear from you. Our annual holiday meeting is an opportunity to share memorable and inspiring nature and travel experiences with other Club members. Show us some highlights, by way of slides, PowerPoint, or photo album. Presentations should be no longer than 10 minutes. This year we will once again have the "Good Read" table. If you have enjoyed a good book that you would recommend to other Naturalists' Club readers, bring it along. For those willing to loan a book out, identification tags will be supplied, so loaner and borrower can swap contact information. You may also just display a book without the option to loan. Either way, look through your library — please try to bring at least one title. If you are able, please bring a holiday dessert to share during the social hour. We can discuss books with other club members while we enjoy delicious holiday treats. Let's celebrate this first day of winter together. Please call Nancy to get on the roster for presentations.

ONLINE EVENTS through LAUGHING BROOK

Details available at visit.massaudubon.org. Registration for MassAudubon members is \$15; non-members, \$20.

Seed Dispersal, *Online*

Thursday, October 20 from 7 to 8 p.m.

Each autumn, seeds are spread in all sorts of ways. Join us to learn how seeds get around.

A Closer Look at Squirrels & Chipmunks, *Online*

Thursday, November 3, from 7 to 8 p.m.

It's hard to miss the fall frenzy, and sometimes humorous antics, of chipmunks and squirrels search for food for winter storage. Take a closer look at their lives, and learn about members of the Massachusetts squirrel family.

Notes of Thanks

August 31, 2022

Dear Dietrich,

We so appreciate the generous gift of \$10,000 to Kestrel's Promise to the Valley campaign from the Naturalists' Club of Springfield. Our understanding is that this gift is unrestricted and may be designated by Kestrel's board to support the area of greatest need in furthering our mission to conserve and care for the Valley's forests, farmland, and riverways, and nurture an enduring love of the land.

Your support helps Kestrel to address challenges that face Valley forests and farms, especially sprawl and the climate crisis, and to make parks and trails more accessible and welcoming to people of all walks of life. By expanding Kestrel's capacity to act quickly and strategically we'll be able to seize emerging opportunities to ensure that what we love about this Valley endures for the benefit of future generations.

Thank you all for helping to launch Kestrel into our next 50 years!

With gratitude,


Kristin DeBoer
Executive Director

Please share our appreciation with all the members of the Naturalists' Club!
Monica



Thanks to Dave Wells for Postage Donations

Club members who receive a paper copy of the newsletter surely have noticed recent issues often contain a variety of old stamps that cover the mailing cost. Several have commented on this over the past few years. The explanation is that one of our long-time members, Dave Wells, acquired a rather large stamp collection and volunteered to provide postage for our mailings. Because his contribution by now covers the cost of a lifetime membership, Dave has become one of our life members. Since he still has stamps, he will be continuing this practice. The Board is most grateful for his generosity.

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The **NATURALISTS' CLUB**
FROM THE TREASURER

Those receiving the electronic newsletter will find membership status listed in an upcoming email. For those receiving the paper newsletter, '22-23 (or later) on the mailing label indicates that membership is paid for the coming year; '21-22 indicates that renewal is due. To establish or renew membership, please send information/payment to:

Tom Condon,
80 General Knox Road,
Russell, MA 01071

If your address and contact information have not changed, the form below need not be completed, but please do email us to add your electronic address to our list and to indicate whether you'd like to switch from print to electronic newsletter, which helps us save paper and postage.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- \$20/year—Individual
or Family Membership
- \$30/year—Supporting Membership
- \$50/year—Sustaining Membership
- \$300 Lifetime Membership

Renew your membership

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

Do you opt for electronic delivery of the Naturalists' Club Newsletter? Yes _____ No _____

Requests for programs/trips: Please send information per the above to: Club Treasurer, Tom Condon, 80 General Knox Road, Russell, MA 01071



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.

2022 OCTOBER to DECEMBER
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The layout of this issue is based on a template designed by Loren Hoffman.