



August 2022

* * * **ANNOUNCEMENTS** * * *

LET'S TRY THIS AGAIN!

Ware River Nature Club is headed into another season of activities and events, and we hope you'll be able to join us. A few outdoor field trips are planned for this month. Beyond that, the end of September will bring the return of our monthly in-person educational programs at Rutland Public Library. To ZOOM, or not to ZOOM? . . .that's a big question. There is added expense and labor to offer hybrid presentations. We'll try to gauge the level of interest and participation in ZOOM options and may consider a registration fee. An announcement accompanying our program descriptions will clarify the ZOOM options, so read the fine print if you're considering watching our programs at home. Please note that, for a variety of reasons, we will *not* be recording any of our live programs.

For our first program, tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 28th at 7 p.m., we'll welcome Karro Frost, Conservation Planning Botanist for Mass Wildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species program (NHESP), who will present a slide show and discuss *Picking Our Battles with Non-Native Invasive Plants*. You're not alone in feeling challenged and overwhelmed by the land management dilemmas that occur when dealing with a wide array of invasives! Stay tuned next month for more details.

TIP FOR HOT-WEATHER BIRDING: ADD A SIMPLE BIRDBATH TO YOUR YARD

Along with the inevitable heat of summer months, accompanied by drought conditions in some years (this year being one of them, unfortunately) comes the need for water for the birds in our yards and gardens. Ideas for water features abound, ranging from extremely elaborate (and expensive) to DIY models. A common feature of the “best” birdbaths: one or more *shallow* pools.

In the first July/August issue of the newly-resurrected *Bird Watcher's Digest*, now named simply *BWD*, Julie Zickefoose describes her quest to build a better birdbath, and, having met her goal of inventing a fine bird oasis that could be constructed for under \$60, is sharing what she's learned at warblerfall.com. There's a modest fee to access the instructional video and PDF instructions. If you've been trying to figure out how to make and easily deploy a good birdbath, Julie's WarblerFall might be just the ticket!

Alternatively, member Bill Platenik has shared his plan for a bird-bathing pool that is fairly easy to put together and is drawing many species of birds to his water feature on a regular basis. Bill has had a birdbath area with a solar recirculating pump and drip for a long time, but this year he decided to construct a “new-and-improved” system:

“I decided to replace the solar pump with the electric one [due to various problems]. The [basin] I was using is made from a type of plastic that gets brittle with age; I wanted a different type of container. I also wanted to try to prevent organic matter from getting into the pump.

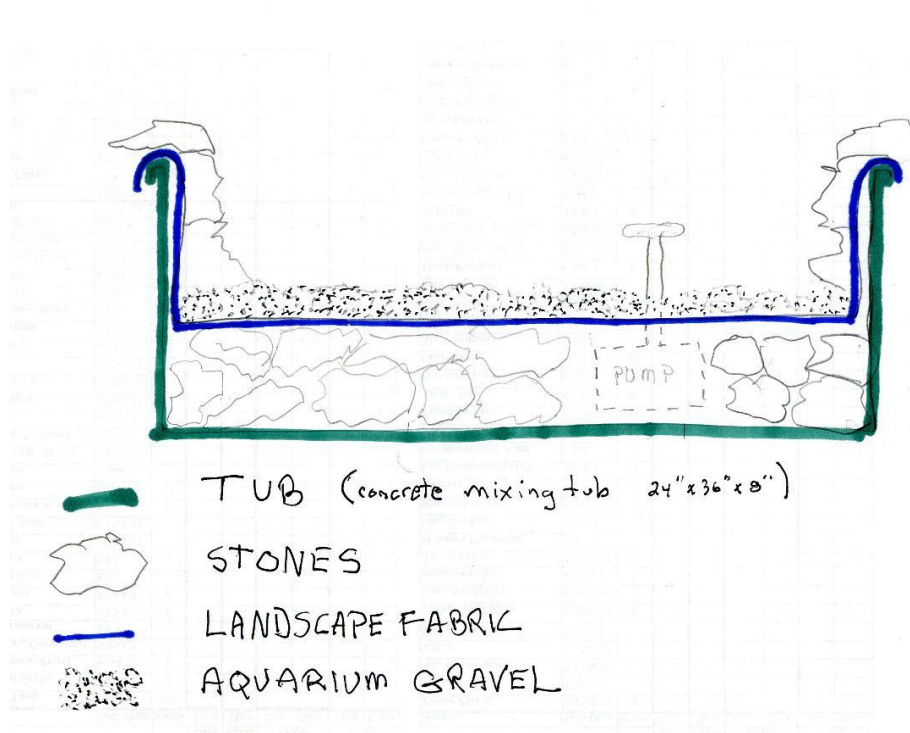
Below is a diagram of the design I came up with. I used a tub [designed for mixing] concrete. It's thicker and more durable. . .After putting stones into the tub, I placed the pump [at the bottom], then covered the stones and pump with landscape fabric. I made a small slit in the landscape fabric to allow the fountain tube to pass through the fabric. The fabric will (hopefully) prevent stuff from filtering down to the bottom of the tub and getting sucked into the filter.

I covered the landscape fabric with aquarium gravel. I sloped the gravel so there is a 'deep end' and a 'shallow end', placed stones around the edge to hide the edge of the tub, and put a few stones in the water.



The birds seem to really like this setup. I think maybe the gravel bottom is more 'bird friendly' than the birdbath with just stones. It is easier to setup/control the depth of the water by moving the gravel around. I've seen two or three species in the bath at the same time on several occasions, and once there were five Baltimore orioles at the birdbath at the same time."







Photos by Bill Platenik

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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ATHOL BIRD AND NATURE CLUB

BEE DIVERSITY AND STRUCTURE

with Michael Veit

Sunday August 7th

Miller's River

Environmental Center

100 Main Street, Athol



As part of the ABNC and MREC Open House series, Dave Small will host this presentation and discussion by Michael Veit. There are almost 400 species of bees documented in Massachusetts. They include species having a wide range of lifestyles that are reflected in their physical characteristics and behaviors. Mike will explore the diversity of Massachusetts bees through the window of structural diversity by taking a close-up look at how some bees are adapted to different aspects of their life history including pollen gathering, host plant specificity, nesting, and brood parasitism.



MASSACHUSETTS BUTTERFLY CLUB



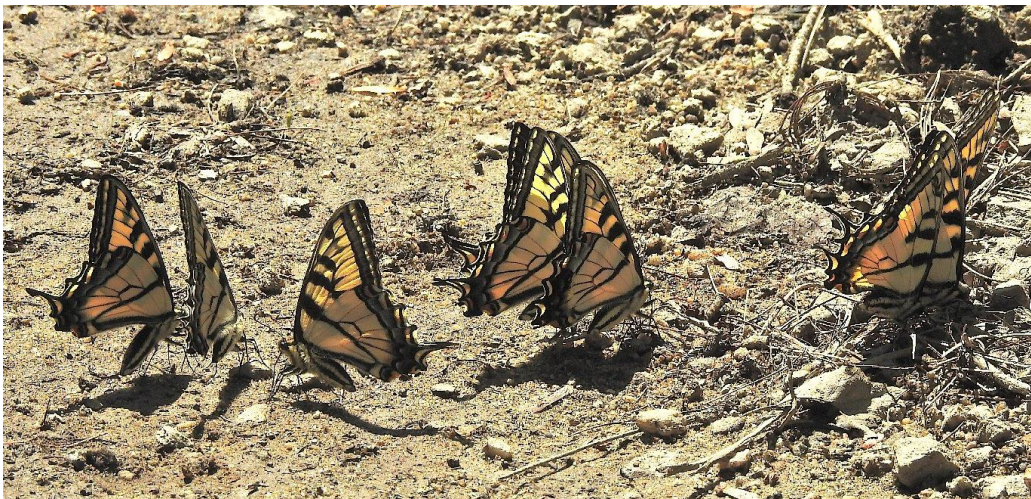
BUTTERFLY WALK at NORTH COMMON MEADOW, PETERSHAM

Thursday August 11th

9 a.m.- 1 p.m.

Leader: Wendy Howes

We can expect a variety of butterflies at this Trustees of Reservations Property, although it can be hit-or-miss depending upon weather patterns. Food, including take-out, and restroom at The Petersham Country Store on Main Street. Parking is not available on-site; meet in front of the Petersham Library, 23 Common St. from where we'll walk down to the Meadow. Please contact warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com to sign up.



Eastern Tiger Swallowtails

Photo by Doug Wipf

PRINCETON OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE – PRINCETON HIKES!

HIKE AROUND MASS AUDUBON'S WACHUSETT MEADOW SANCTUARY

Goodnow Road, Princeton
Saturday August 13th 9 a.m.



This will be an easy-to-moderate loop of 5 miles around the entire Sanctuary. It's not often that we get a chance to hike so much of the property!

For more information or to register:
TrailAroundPrincetonMA@gmail.com

WARE RIVER NATURE CLUB & MASSACHUSETTS BUTTERFLY CLUB

**BIRDS AND
BUTTERFLIES at
MUDDY BROOK
WMA
HARDWICK
Sunday August 14th
8 a.m. – noon
Leader: Wendy Howes**



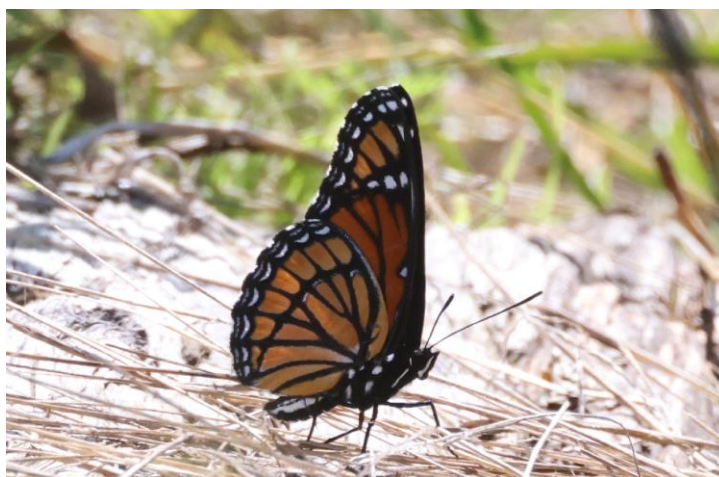
This restored oak-pine barrens boasts an exciting diversity of plants, birds, and invertebrates. While the presence of its bird species has been well-documented—we should see Eastern Towhee, Prairie Warbler, Northern Flicker, and a lot more—the butterflies here haven't been fully explored. Let's see what we can find!

There is plenty of shrubby and grassland edge habitat, and Muddy Brook and several shallow ponds provide wetland habitat.

Plan to take precautions to discourage ticks.

Bring snacks/lunch/beverages if you wish.

Please contact warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com to sign up.



Viceroy at Muddy Brook WMA Photo by Alan Rawle

MASS AUDUBON

**On-line program—TUNING IN
TO SUMMER NIGHT SOUNDS
Wednesday August 17th 7 – 8 p.m.**

Instructors:

Douglas Lowry - Adult Learning Specialist, South East Region
Martha Gach - Education Manager and Conservation Coordinator,
Broad Meadow Brook Sanctuary
Members: \$15 Non-members: \$20



Summer evenings are accompanied by a natural soundscape that changes with the season, peaking in late summer. This online presentation will focus on the creatures making all that racket, why and how they are sounding off, and who is listening. We'll consider sound production and the specialized anatomy involved in it, along with unique behaviors of sound producing insects. Learn to differentiate and recognize common night sounds, and the ideal timing for when you're most likely to hear them.

Registration is required:

[REGISTER](#)

MASSACHUSETTS BUTTERFLY CLUB



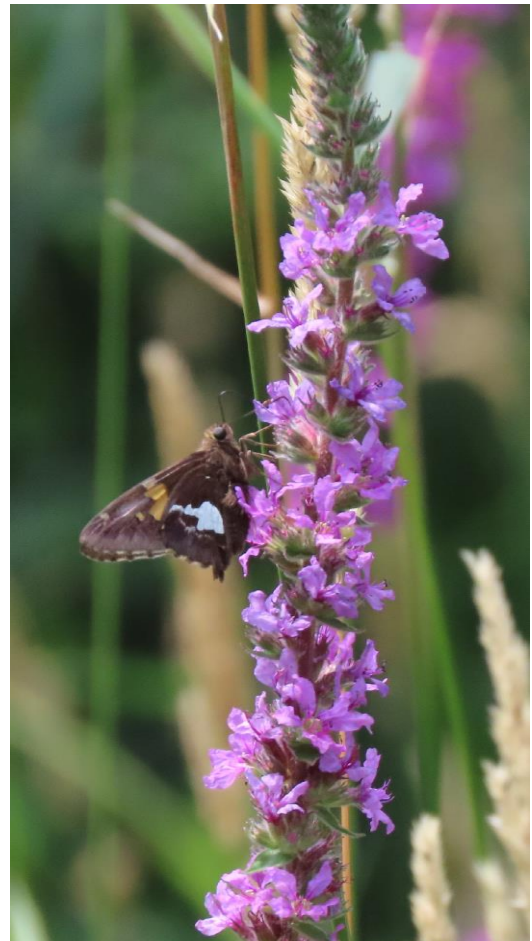
Question Mark

Photo by Bo Zaremba

BUTTERFLY WALK
BARRE FALLS DAM-
WARE RIVER
WATERSHED,
Hubbardston/Barre
Sunday August 21st
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Leader: Wendy Howes

Depending on weather effects earlier in the season and the mowing schedules for various parcels, we'll choose a few fields to explore. A variety of habitat management strategies has resulted in a patchwork of fields, shrubby hedgerows, and woods. There are many wetland areas and dirt roads that attract butterflies when conditions are right. Park and meet at first paved area with kiosk on the left side of the entry road from Route 62 in Hubbardston. Restrooms are available. Bring snacks/lunch/beverage if you wish. Please contact warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com to sign up.



Silver-spotted Skipper Photo by Ted Purc

PRINCETON OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE – PRINCETON HIKES!

HIKE ON
THE SOUTH SIDE of
MASS AUDUBON'S
WACHUSETT MEADOW
SANCTUARY

Wednesday August 24th
10 a.m.

This walk will be an easy-to-moderate
3-mile loop.

For more information or to register:
TrailAroundPrincetonMA@gmail.com



American Goldfinch Photo by Ted Purcell



Pearl Crescent Photo by Mike Perkins

WARE RIVER NATURE CLUB

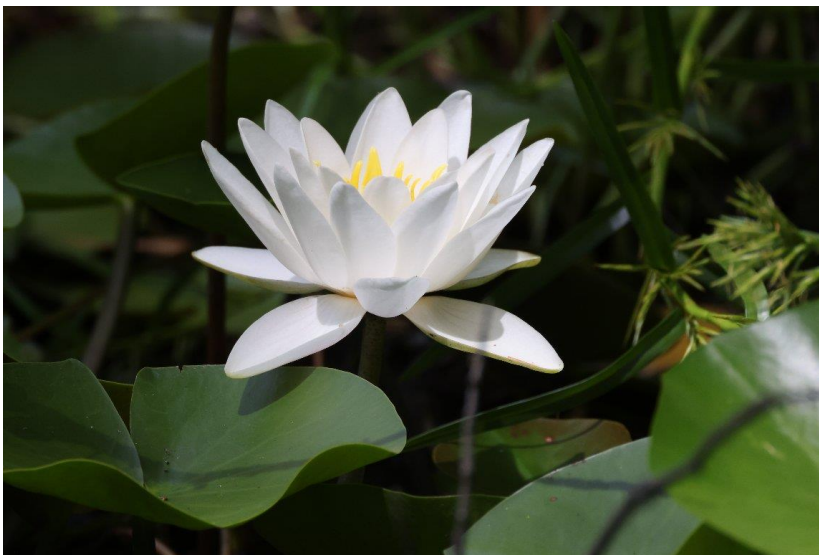
HARVARD POND NATURE HIKE

Saturday August 27th 8 a.m. – noon



American white water lily

Photo by Alan Rawle



Not usually on our field trip schedule at this time of year, this walk around Harvard Pond will have a different “flavor.”

Water lilies are blooming, we may encounter a few shorebirds, and insect life is rich in late summer. Most of the trail around the pond is well-shaded.

Plan to dress for the weather.

Bring binoculars, camera, and food/beverages if you wish.

Please sign up in advance at <mailto:warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com>