



January 2023

*** * * ANNOUNCEMENTS * * ***

TENTH ANNUAL MEETING DETAILS IN THE WORKS!

You've heard the adage about "best-laid plans." As it turns out, plans for celebrating our tenth year Annual Dinner Meeting & Silent Auction, with guest speakers and plenty of time to socialize with fellow nature-lovers, have hit a few snags. Initially intended to take place on February 26th, the event is being postponed to March. The location will be Harvard Forest in Petersham, where an attractive and cozy dining area adjoins a state-of-the-art lecture space. We're excited about this new venue! After we receive final confirmations from our invited speakers and catering service, readers of this newsletter will be the first to learn of all the details. Stay tuned!

HUBBARDSTON CULTURAL COUNCIL AWARDS GRANT TO WRNC

Back in October, we submitted a grant request to Hubbardston's Cultural Council, one of Massachusetts Cultural Council's local entities. The largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation, the Local Cultural Council (LCC) Program enriches the cultural life of all cities and towns in the state. Our request for funding a science-based outdoor tracking event with David Brown was approved. Ware River Nature Club is grateful for LCC support, without which we would be unable to take advantage of David's expertise and knowledge. He is one of our region's top experts when it comes to finding and deciphering wildlife sign and tracks in the field.

For information about upcoming local wildlife tracking opportunities and David's field trip with our Club, see below.



UPCOMING EVENTS



ATHOL BIRD & NATURE CLUB

ZOOM WEBINAR--



Photo by Doug Wipf

**WASPS: THE
ASTONISHING
DIVERSITY
OF A
MISUNDERSTOOD
INSECT**
by Eric Eaton

Wednesday January 11th 7 p.m.

If you equate "wasp" with "yellowjacket" or "hornet," or maybe "paper wasp," you are not alone. The truth is that the overwhelming majority of wasps are solitary, small, and/or stingless. Join wasp expert and author Eric Eaton to learn about the fascinating lives of these insects and their vital roles in wild and manmade ecosystems.

Register for Webinar:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_a3WKSGF2TGIPZBTQGC7IUw

PRINCETON OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
PRINCETON HIKES!

RAIL TRAIL HIKE--RUTLAND/BARRE

Saturday January 14th 9 a.m.

An easy-to-moderate 4+ mile hike along the rail trail in Rutland/Barre. Sign up to get details about parking and starting point, and to confirm start time, all dependent on trail conditions.



HIKE AT MASS AUDUBON'S WACHUSETT MEADOW SANCTUARY

Wednesday January 18th 1 p.m.

This hike will be along 3.5 miles of trails on the south side of the Sanctuary.
Easy-to-moderate.

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

WARE RIVER NATURE CLUB



LUNAR NEW YEAR
NATURE WALK
HUBBARDSTON STATE
FOREST

Saturday January 21st
9:30 - 12:30

Each year in the Lunar calendar is represented by one of twelve zodiac animals included in the cycle of twelve stations or “signs” along the apparent path of the sun through the cosmos. This year is the year of the Rabbit. The rabbit population in our area has certainly grown over the past few years, so maybe we’ll encounter some of their tracks. We’ll also enjoy looking for signs of other animal movements, watch for winter birds, and find some of last summer’s insect and bird nests.

To sign up: wativerivernatureclub@yahoo.com

WILDLIFE TRACKING COLLABORATIVE

Wildlife Tracking adventures for experienced or new tracking enthusiasts who seek collaborative and supportive learning in all seasons. Led by Pam Landry. Dates TBD by participants.

West Central MA-various tracking hot spots.

Contact Pam Landry: naturetrax@gmail.com

Walnut Hill



Tracking & Nature Center

ADVENTURES IN TRACKING IN THE QUABBIN REGION

January 15th & 22nd & February 5th 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Come join us in an adventure unravelling the mysteries of the winter world. We will help you hone your observational skills to detect the details of the dramas unfolding in the forest.

Each day we will explore a new location in the Quabbin region, where tracks and sign reveal the interactions between wild animals and their environment.

Tracking is, indeed, "reading Nature's book."

Activity level: moderate, off-trail with bush-whacking required.

This is a long day in the winter woods, so come prepared with appropriate gear. If there is deep snow, snowshoes may be required; we have a few pairs that we loan out for a fee of \$5.

Fee: \$50/person

For more information and/or to register,

click [HERE](#)

QUABBIN TRAILS PROGRAMS

with David Brown

Saturday, January 14th, Sunday, January 22nd & January 29th
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Quabbin Trails tracking programs vary from session to session depending on what the conditions and wildlife availability dictate. If there is no snow, we spend much time discovering animal sign camouflaged against a concealing background. Once found the sign is identified and then interpreted for the animal's relationship with the habitat it which it was found. No previous tracking experience is necessary. For more information and/or to register, click [HERE](#) .



MASS AUDUBON
To see January & February programs
and classes, click [HERE](#)
All require registration and fee.

WARE RIVER NATURE CLUB

THREE YEARS IN THE LIVES OF HARDWICK'S SANDHILL CRANES

by Alan F. Rawle

Leroy Pollard Memorial Library

45 Memorial Drive, New Braintree

Wednesday January 25th 7 p.m.



Since May 2020, Alan and his wife Wendy have been following the behaviors and activities of a pair of Sandhill Cranes in Hardwick. In this program, Alan will describe successful and unsuccessful nestings documented over that period.

The talk will first provide a background to the history of sandhill cranes in New England, noting the increased numbers in the region since 2000 or so, and then focus on detailed observations of the pair of cranes that they've been fortunate to encounter over a 3-year period. Alan has diligently pieced together the timescales & locations of the crane family--2 adults and 2 young/juveniles (colts) for the past 2 years (2021 & 2022).

The presentation will include pictures of cranes eating, walking, flying, bathing, and "at play" over the 3-year period, together with other pertinent and relevant information.

Please contact warivernatureclub@yahoo.com if you would like to register to attend via ZOOM.

WARE RIVER NATURE CLUB

WINTER TRACKING WALK

with David Brown

Hubbardston

Saturday February 4th 9 a.m. – noon



On this walk we will search for the tracks and sign of indigenous wild animals that we will identify and interpret for behavior. Usually concealed by foliage and the night, these animals leave behind information which we can examine and in that way gain insight into their hidden lives.

No previous tracking experience is necessary. Dress for the weather with more clothes than you think you will need, since tracking is often a slow process as we stop to discuss what we find.

If snow depths warrant, you may wish to bring snowshoes.

Walk leader David Brown is a well-known tracker with several decades of experience tracking and interpreting the wildlife of New England and the Southwest. He is the author of two books on wildlife tracking and a set of field-usable identification cards.

In the past 30 years he has led hundreds of outdoor tracking programs.

To register: warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com



This program is supported by a grant from the Hubbardston Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

