



## \* \* \* ANNOUNCEMENTS \* \* \*

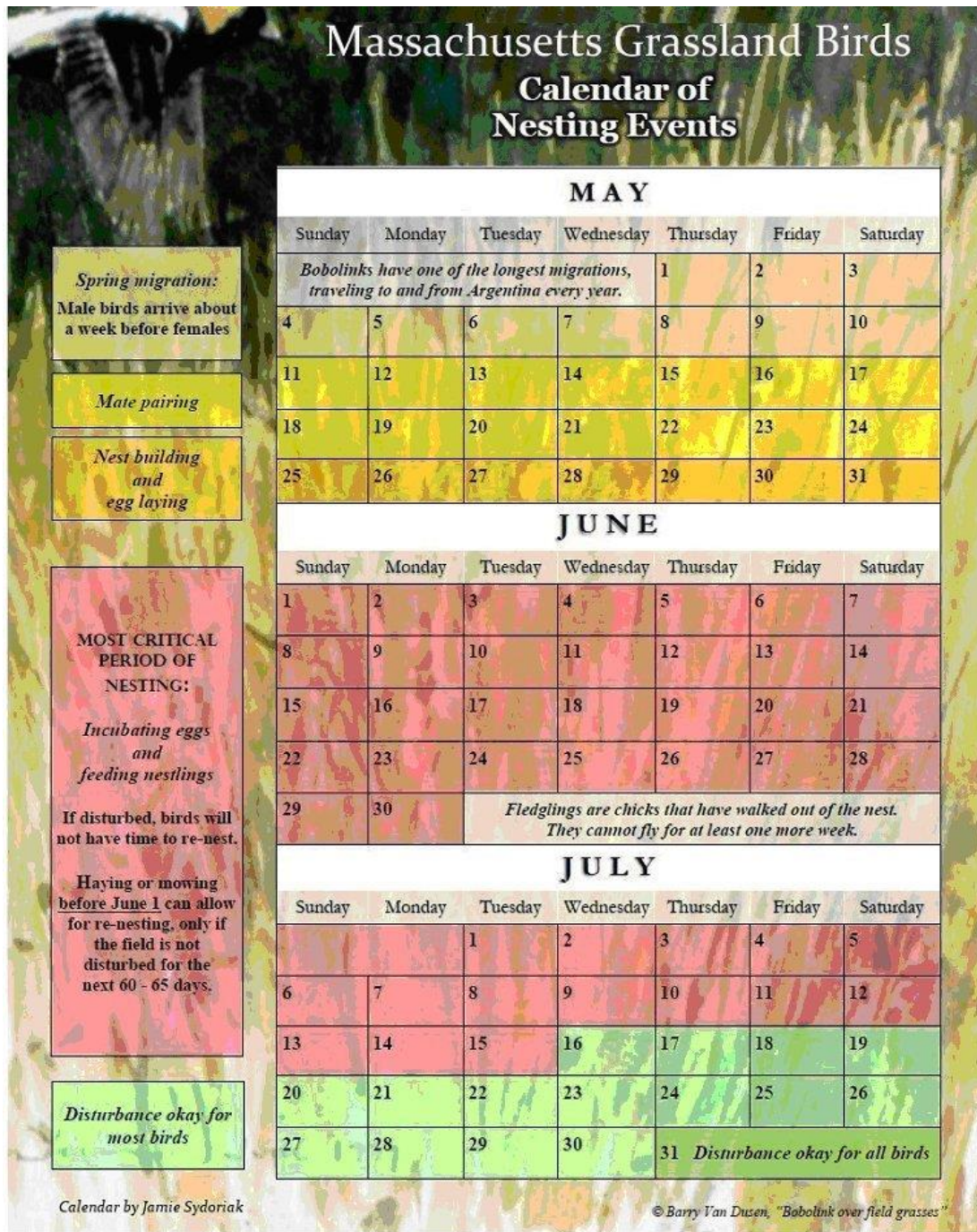
### **SANDHILL CRANES WITH TWO YOUNG SEEN IN HARDWICK**

Sandhill Cranes, still considered rare-to-uncommon in Massachusetts despite a few instances of confirmed breeding in the western part of the state and an increasing number of March-November sightings scattered around the state, have not been known to breed in Worcester County. In mid-May, two adults with two recently-hatched young were observed and photographed in Hardwick, likely the first documented breeding record for Worcester County! Generating much local excitement, the family was observed for a 2+ day period in a privately-owned grassy field alongside the marshy edge of a beaver pond. The birds departed the site around May 20<sup>th</sup> and have not been relocated. It's speculated that the family headed west—although there is no way to be certain!—so if you are exploring the west side of Hardwick or the eastern shore of Quabbin Reservoir, keep an eye out for this special foursome. Contact [warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com](mailto:warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com) with any Worcester County sightings of this species and especially any family group.



## DO THE MATH: BOBOLINKS IN PERIL

Given the earlier-and-earlier date when hayfield grasses ripen, along with optimal weather conditions, it's no surprise that farmers are mowing their fields now. This doesn't bode well for Bobolink nesting success in our region this year, since Bobolinks will not try to re-nest if their first clutch of eggs or young is destroyed. Please support late-mowing regimes on our public lands and advocate for protection of some acreage on private lands.





## TIPS FOR A BIRD- AND-POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY YARD

The slide below was part of a Native Plant Trust webinar presented on April 28<sup>th</sup>. We think it provides a helpful and concise summary.

Happy Gardening!

### Making your backyard a safe haven for birds

- ▶ Place large, native forest-interior trees around the edges of your property then work inwards, starting with understory trees, large shrubs, then smaller shrubs, then finally grasses and flowers
- ▶ Create a forest garden <https://happydiyhome.com/forest-garden/>
- ▶ Plant native plants that occur in your area
- ▶ Make your lawn less “tidy”
- ▶ Create a pollinator garden with a wildflower meadow
- ▶ Choose native plants that provide food for birds (black cherry, blueberry, winterberry holly, juniper, bayberry, native sunflowers,
- ▶ Don't use insect traps
- ▶ Avoid pesticide use on lawns
- ▶ Provide water source



**\* \* \* UPCOMING EVENTS \* \* \***

**ATHOL BIRD & NATURE CLUB**

**Zoom Meeting & Webinar**

**TURTLES OF MASSACHUSETTS**

**with Mike Jones**

**State Herpetologist for the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife**

**Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup> 7:00 p.m.**



Join State Herpetologist Mike Jones for a great discussion of Massachusetts turtles.

Mike's program will be recorded for future reference. Mike is interested in the ecology and conservation of North American biodiversity with a special emphasis on reptiles, amphibians, conifers, and alpine ecosystems. Mike is also an adjunct faculty member at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and Antioch University New England, where he has taught Conservation Biology and Continental Ecology.

This program will be recorded for future reference.

Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device. Click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89328075975>

Or iPhone one-tap :US: +13017158592, 89328075975# or +13126266799,89328075975

# ATHOL BIRD & NATURE CLUB

Zoom Webinar

## INTRODUCTION TO MOTH WATCHING: WELCOME TO THE DARK SIDE

with Dave Small

**Wednesday June 17th 7:00 p.m.**



Join ABNC president Dave Small for an introduction to attracting and watching moths while socially- distancing in your backyard. Learn how to use lights and bait to attract moths and get a glimpse of some of the moths you might encounter on a warm June evening.

**Register in advance for this webinar**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_uvBZwY\\_RSj6H63dBfK-cDw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_uvBZwY_RSj6H63dBfK-cDw)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.



WARE RIVER NATURE CLUB

# FIRST DAY OF SUMMER BIRD & NATURE WALK

Saturday June 20<sup>th</sup> 8 a.m.-noon

[Rain date: Sunday, June 21<sup>st</sup>]

Hardwick location TBA

Leader: Wendy Howes



Summer's here, and the time is right. . .for getting out to explore nature. The Town of Hardwick is fortunate to have a number of public hiking areas that provide ample social distancing space for small groups. The Town is also home to myriad bird species that are now nesting and fledging young, as well as a variety of wildflowers and plenty of butterflies and dragonflies. Nature-watching opportunities abound, even on a short walk. Join us for a chance to see and—if you wish—

photograph some summer highlights.

Location of this field trip will be based upon interests and preferences of participants, and availability of parking. Number of participants will be limited.

Contact [warivernatureclub@yahoo.com](mailto:warivernatureclub@yahoo.com) to sign up.

Please indicate your primary nature interest, walking restrictions (if any), and any concerns about health guidelines.

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY-MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER

Zoom Webinar

# RESTORING BOG TURTLES IN MASSACHUSETTS

with Angela Sirois-Pitel, TNC Stewardship Manager  
&

Mike Jones, MassWildlife's State Herpetologist  
Thursday, June 25<sup>th</sup> 12 noon



*Photo: Turtle Conservancy*

Hidden away in the wetlands of western Massachusetts, a small-but-mighty bog turtle population is stabilizing, thanks to the ongoing study of this endangered species and careful management of its habitat. Angela and Mike will share stories about days spent wading through bogs in search of nesting, basking, and foraging turtles. They will also answer your questions about this important species.

**Interested participants must register for this free webinar  
at this link:**

<https://tnc.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYoc-2vrjooH9MznfJ5v5Ag6A4PvzFyzjYh>

## STATUS OF OTHER LOCAL NATURE & OUTDOOR OPPORTUNITIES

### WACHUSETT GREENWAYS

Events through 6/30/2020 are canceled

Please enjoy time outdoors with your household members.

During this time the portable restrooms are removed from the Mass Central Rail Trail to protect from spreading the virus. Please greet others on the trail with a smile or wave as you pass at a good distance. Do not pass closely or draw near to people or pets on the trail.

### FORBUSH BIRD CLUB

July field trips will be held at the discretion of the leaders and, of course, in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidelines in effect at that time. For information go to:

<http://forbushbird.org/events?view=calendar&month=05-2020>

July 19: Birds & Butterflies with Massachusetts Butterfly Club, Leicester (Dolores Price)

July 25: Wachusett Reservoir IBA Breeding Bird Census (Kevin Bourinot)

Many **MASS AUDUBON** trails are open.

<https://www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/wildlife-sanctuaries/trails>

**TRUSTEES OF RESERVATIONS**—Properties that are open

<http://www.thetrustees.org/COVID19/open.html>

### MASSACHUSETTS STATE PARKS/DEPT. of CONSERVATION & RECREATION

Massachusetts state parks and other natural resources managed by DCR remain open and accessible to the public.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-state-parks-covid-19-update>

### MASS WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management Areas are open, fishing is open, and trout stocking will continue. <https://www.mass.gov/news/masswildlife-covid-19-response>