

September 2023



* * * ANNOUNCEMENTS * * *

MONTHLY PROGRAMS BEGIN

Our monthly educational program season is off to a fascinating start at the end of September when Professor Kaitlyn Mathis of Clark University joins us to raise our consciousness about the importance of ants in ecosystems. This in-person presentation at Rutland Public Library is free and open to all. We're excited about Dr. Mathis sharing this talk with us, and we're grateful to Rutland Public Library for providing a comfortable and accessible meeting space.

Mark your calendars for the October program on the 25th when Jim Morelly will show some of his most recent photographs and trailcam pictures and videos of Quabbin region wildlife. Amazing!

NEW POST UP ON WEBSITE

The latest *FROM THE FIELD* entry on the WRNC website is up and ready for viewing. Take a moment to look at *Creatures Great and Small—Spring & Summer 2023*: <http://www.warerivernatureclub.org/from-the-field>
We hope you enjoy it and perhaps be inspired to contribute some photos of your own. Send your submissions to warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com . We'd love to see what you've been seeing when out exploring the natural world.

* * * UPCOMING EVENTS * * *

ATHOL BIRD & NATURE CLUB



EARLY BIRD BIRDING

with Jeff Johnstone

Fridays: September 8th,
15th, 22nd, & 29th

7:30 a.m.

Join Jeff for one of his traditional fall
migration field trips. Meet at the
Millers River Environmental Center
100 Main Street, Athol
Call him at 978 249-9052
to reserve your spot.



Photos by Alan Rawle

WARE RIVER NATURE CLUB

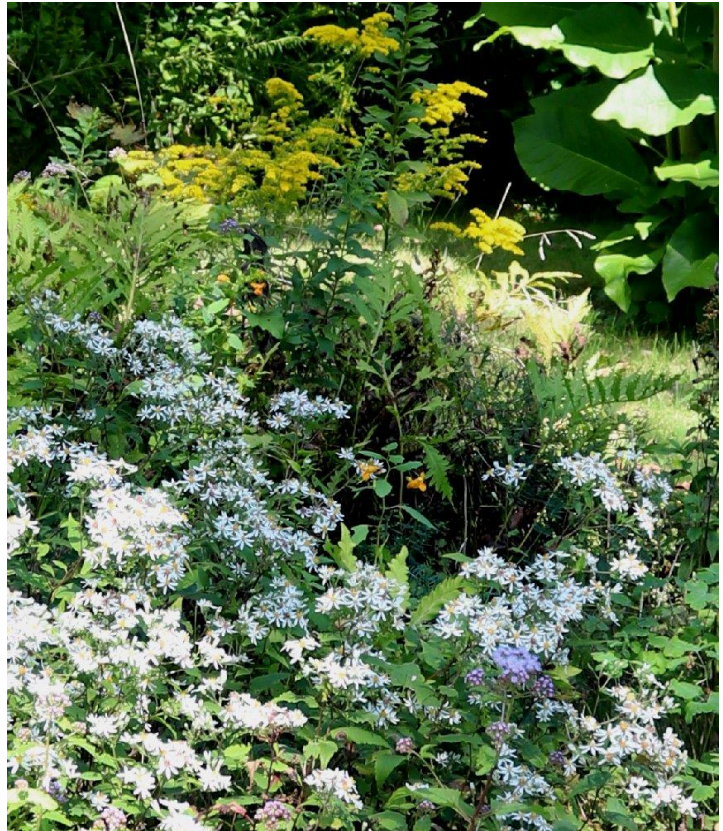
ASTERS, GOLDENRODS, & OTHER FALL WILDFLOWERS

Mt. Wachusett,
Princeton
Saturday
September 9th 1 p.m.

[Rain date:

Sunday September 10th]

Leader: Robert Bertin



This walk will provide an introduction to some of the common fall-flowering plants of central Massachusetts, with a particular focus on asters and goldenrods. We will take a close look at the key features that are needed to separate the different species of these familiar groups. If you have them, a hand lens and a copy of Newcomb's wildflower guide will be useful.

Robert Bertin is a professor emeritus of biology at College of the Holy Cross, where his teaching has included courses in Field Botany and Ecology. His recent research examines the flora of southern New England, and how it has changed over time due to land use changes, species introductions, and climate change. He is a co-author of monographs on the flora of Worcester and Franklin Counties, and is completing a 4-year project on the flora of Wachusett Mountain.

Register: warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com

PRINCETON OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE - PRINCETON HIKES!

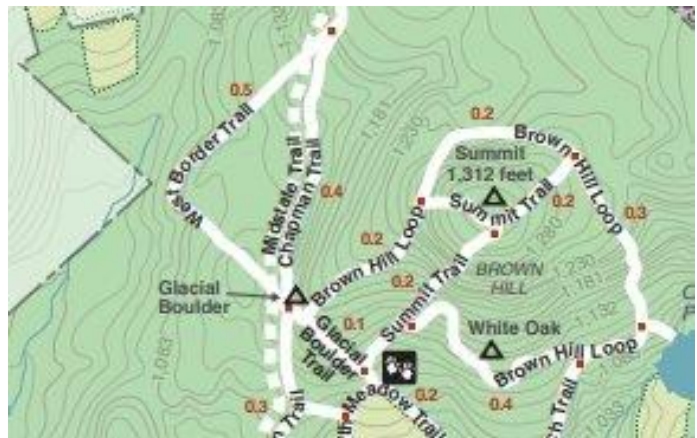


WACHUSETT RESERVOIR CRANBERRY HIKE Saturday September 9th 9 a.m.

Join fellow hiker Karen for an easy-moderate 3-mile hike to a cranberry field on the shore of Wachusett Reservoir.

NORTH-SIDE HIKE at MASS AUDUBON'S WACHUSETT MEADOW SANCTUARY Wednesday September 13th 10 a.m

This 3-mile hike of easy-to-moderate effort level will take participants along the Glacial Boulder and Brown Hill trails.



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

HARVARD FOREST SEMINARS

Seminar— MYCORRHIZAL FUNGAL KEY ROLE IN FOREST SOIL FUNCTION AND THEIR VULNERABILITY TO URBANIZATION

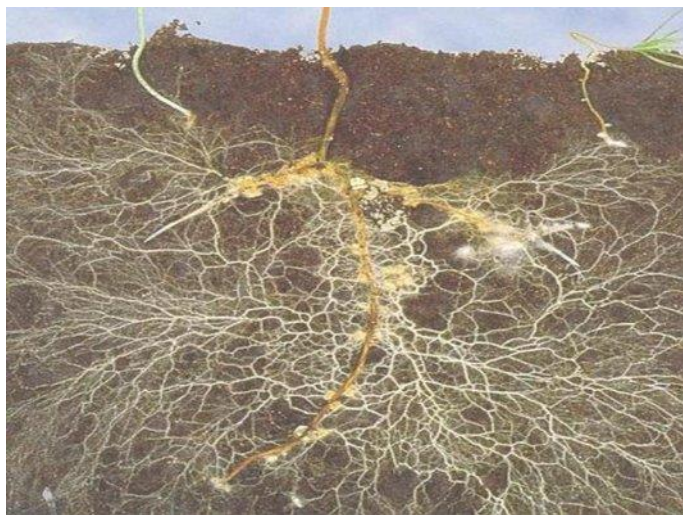
by Chikae Tatsumi

Department of Biology, Boston University

Wednesday, September 13th 11 a.m. – noon



Chikae is a postdoctoral researcher interested in soil microbial communities and their function of biogeochemical cycling under the effect of human activities, such as urbanization and chemical pollution, and how to improve these damaged functions. She earned a Ph.D. degree from Kyoto University, Japan, where she studied the relationship between dominant mycorrhizal type (ectomycorrhizal vs. arbuscular mycorrhizal) and soil N-cycling in dryland forests. Her favorite mushroom is *Astraeus hygrometricus* (earthstar fungi).



In-person attendance is welcome and a livestream option is available via Zoom. Seminars are free and open to the public; no pre-registration is required. For Zoom link or additional information, contact

jplisinski@fas.harvard.edu

WARE RIVER NATURE CLUB

WOODLAND MUSHROOM WALK

at the EAST QUABBIN
LAND TRUST
HENRY'S GROVE
PRESERVE
HUBBARDSTON

Saturday
September 16th
10 a.m.

Leader: Lindsay Gwyther



This season has been a great one for a good variety of interesting and colorful fungi species. Join us for this casual walk to learn some common mushrooms and how to identify them. The main focus will be on general knowledge of fungi characteristics and appearance, with very little emphasis on edibility.



Leader Lindsay Gwyther is a huge mushroom enthusiast who went foraging for the first time in 2001 in Finland. Since then, she has endeavored to increase her knowledge of the fungal kingdom, ever eager to learn about all things co-existing in our shared natural environment. On the myco front, she is mostly self-taught, and has completed the

Learn Your Land Foraging Wild Mushrooms online course and held membership in the Boston Mycological Club.

Space is limited. Register: warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com

PRINCETON OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE - PRINCETON HIKES!

HIKE THROUGH WHITE OAK LAND TRUST'S HOLBROOK FOREST, HOLDEN

Saturday September 16th 9 a.m.



This hike will cover 5 moderate miles and take us over to the Cascades in Worcester. Holbrook Forest is a 59-acre parcel with trailhead and parking on Fisher Road in Holden. A notable feature found in Holbrook Forest is a glacial erratic named Cousin's Rock, formed of a material called pegmatite.

For more information or to register:

TrailaroundprincetonMA@gmail.com

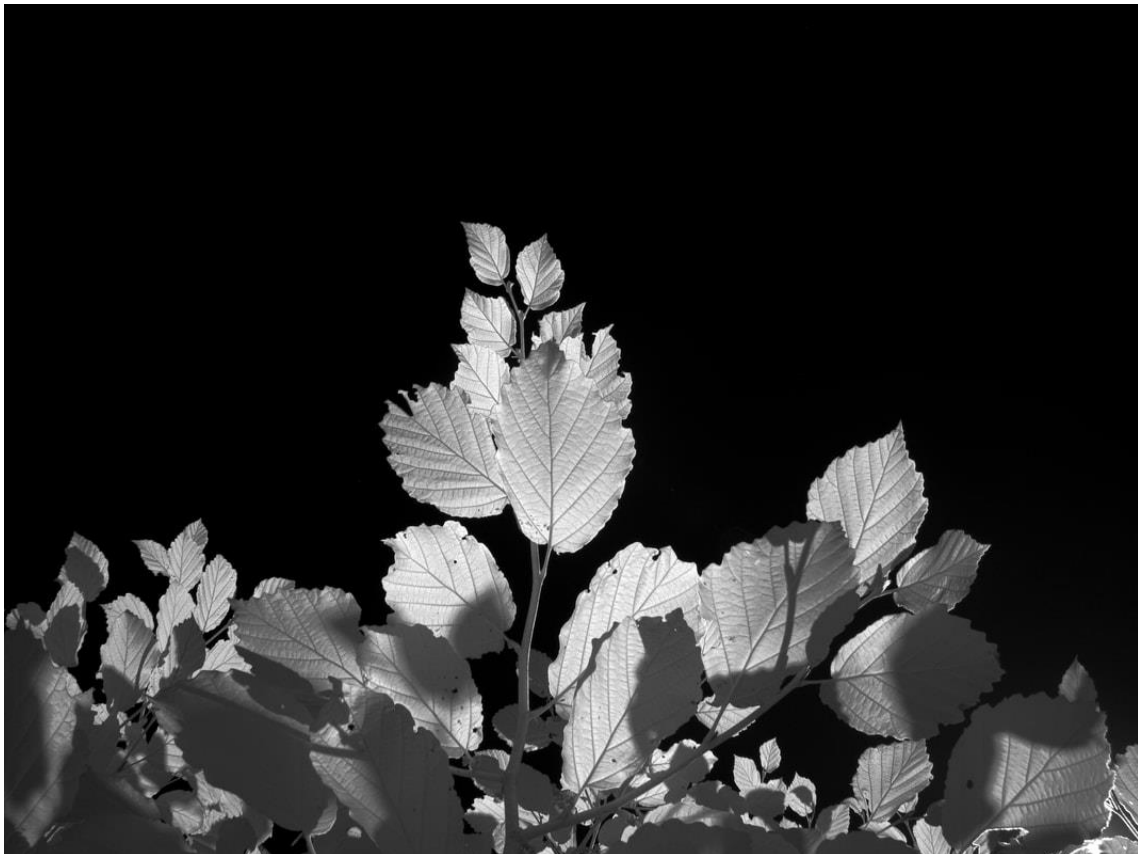


Photo by Anne Greene

FORBUSH BIRD CLUB



BIRDING AT HODGES VILLAGE DAM OXFORD

Sunday, September 17th
7 a.m.

Leader: Mary Baker Caulway
onesadiedog@gmail.com
508-612-5130

Join Mary at one of her favorite birding locations for this new mid-September trip! We will walk 2 to 3 miles on a cart road with relatively flat terrain. This is an excellent location for sparrows and migrating warblers. Meet at the main parking area.

*Directions: Navigate to the meet-up spot 30 Howarth Road, Oxford
OR as follows:*

from Worcester, drive south on I-290/395 to Exit 7B (Sutton Ave./Oxford Center). Merge onto Sutton Ave., and continue through the traffic light onto Charlton St. In 0.5 mile, turn right on Howarth Rd., and turn right to the Dam entrance (GPS 42.120255, -71.876942).



ATHOL BIRD & NATURE CLUB ~ NORTH QUABBIN GARDEN CLUB

LIVING WITH NATURE

by Dave Small

Thursday September 21st 7 p.m.

Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol



Join Dave as he explores the transformation of his yard from a boring suburban lot dominated by lawn to a rich habitat for our native wildlife by removing invasive species, planting native plants, and providing water, food, and cover for a variety of wildlife and people. The result is a space that has become a wonderful place to hang out with family and friends enjoying a wide variety of wildlife.

FORBUSH BIRD CLUB

BIRDING
WINIMUSSET WMA
& NEW BRAINTREE
AREA

Sunday September 24th
7 a.m.

Leader: Rodney Jenkins
508-757-5010



We will explore this beautiful rural area for early-fall migrants.

Waterproof footwear is advised for walking in wet grass.

Meet at the Winimuset WMA parking lot,
Hardwick Rd./Ravine Rd. between Route 67 (New Braintree)
and Route 32 (Hardwick).



Royal Fern

Photo by Doug Wipf

WARE RIVER NATURE CLUB

SMALL BUT MIGHTY: ANT-PLANT INTERACTIONS IN HUMAN- MANAGED ECOSYSTEMS

by Kaitlyn Mathis, PhD

Assistant Professor, Biology Department, Clark University

Wednesday September 27th 7 p.m.

Rutland Public Library, 280 Main Street (Rte.122a) Rutland



What can ants tell us about how organisms will respond to an increasingly warm and urban world? How, when and why can ants impact agroecosystems? In this talk, Dr. Mathis will tell three stories that show how important ants can be to helping us understand the ecology of our increasingly human dominated world. The talk will highlight local research performed recently by members of her lab.



Dr. Mathis earned a Bachelor of Arts in Insect Biology and Biochemistry from Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts. She has a Ph.D. in Environmental Science, Policy and Management from the University of California, Berkeley where she studied trophic interactions between ants and their predators in Mexican coffee agroecosystems. After a NIH postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Arizona she joined the Biology Department at Clark University as an Assistant Professor of Ecology. Her research combines observational studies, manipulative field experiments, and chemical ecology techniques to examine the ecology of ants in human-managed ecosystems.

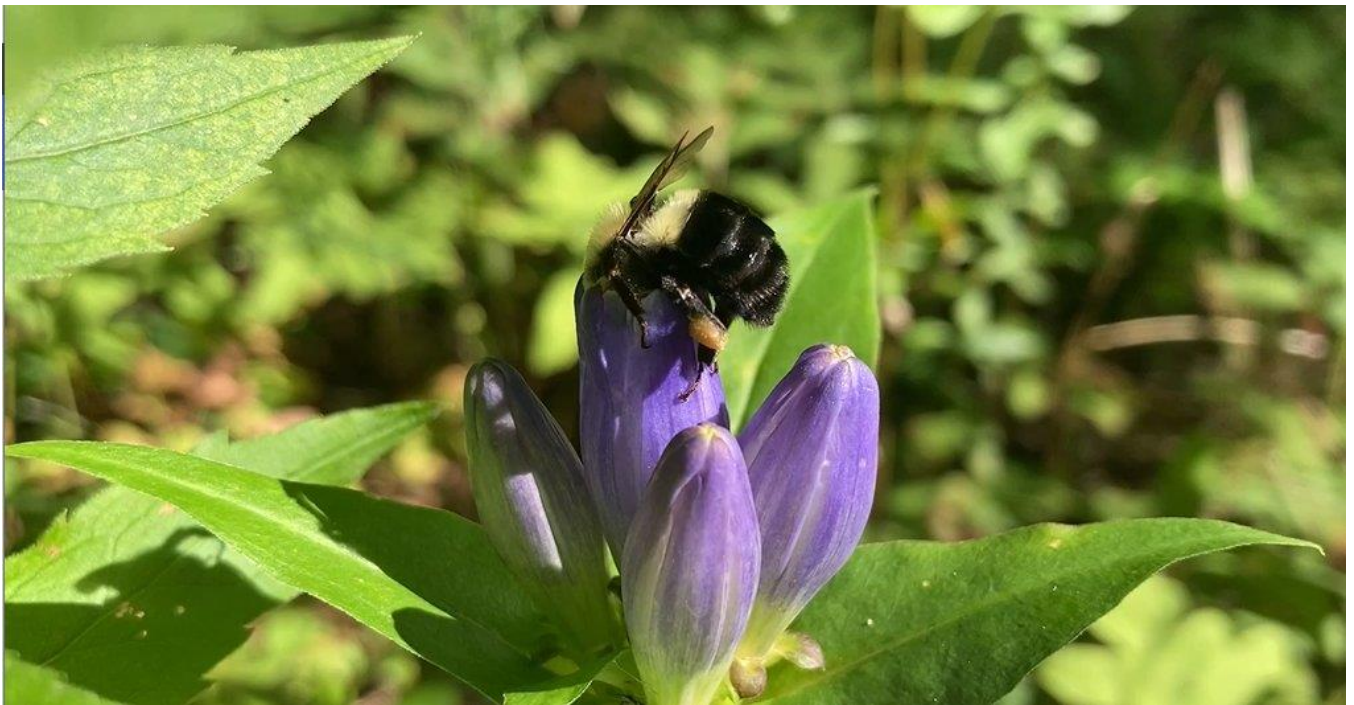
PRINCETON OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE - PRINCETON HIKES!

COBB BROOK LOOP HIKE

Saturday September 30th 9 a.m.

This is an easy-to-moderate 4-mile hike. These trails head from Worcester Road down to the west to the Cobb Brook Ponds area. This hike loops around the trail area, stopping at three spurs that lead to views of beaver ponds or Cobb Brook. The elevation change is 175 feet. The trail can be wet, particularly along the lower section, and there are a few streams that need to be crossed with some caution.

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



Bumblebee on Bottle Gentian (*Gentiana clausa*)

Photo still from video by Doug Wipf