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NEW FROM THE FIELD POSTS UP ON WEB-SITE

The conservation blog page of the Club web-site is called FROM THE FIELD and features text and photographs reflecting local natural history observations. In case you haven't visited the page recently, this is a reminder that new posts were added in March mid-April. Take a look at <http://www.warerivernatureclub.org/from-the-field> . Thank you to members who have shared their early spring images. We'd love to post your photographs, art work, and writings about nature in central Massachusetts. Send submissions to: warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com .

MANY THANKS!

Thank you to Anthony Costello who has volunteered to serve as Membership Secretary for the Club. We're very grateful to all who have joined or renewed membership for 2020. Your support is appreciated as we continue to plan future nature education programs and field trips, and discussions about special projects are underway. We couldn't do it without your help!

WINNER OF APRIL SCAVENGER HUNT CHALLENGE

Joanie MacPhee of Athol submitted her photographs worth 15 points to win our first "virtual field trip" Scavenger Hunt. Her prize was a choice of one of the many excellent, fine-quality books about nature, ecology, birding, and gardening which we recently acquired. Great job, Joanie!

Another scavenger hunt suitable for individuals, twosomes, or three people practicing suggested safety guidelines is under UPCOMING EVENTS. We hope you'll be inspired to snap a few relevant photos if you're outdoors exploring nature in the designated week. Send us what you come up with; you'll be surprised at how easy it is to accumulate points, and you could win a nice book for your collection.

PLEASE REPORT KESTREL AND SWALLOW NESTINGS

Mass Audubon is asking citizen scientists to record American Kestrel, Barn Swallow, and Cliff Swallow nesting sites from May 20-August 20. A full description of the project can be found here: <https://blogs.massaudubon.org/distractiondisplays/two-new-citizen-science-projects-for-2020-kestrel-and-swallow-nest-site-reporting/>

Of special interest to Ware River Nature Club and the local SwallowConservation.org is the status of Cliff Swallows in central Massachusetts. The last known local nesting of this species was in New Braintree in 2018. Contact warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com if you suspect or know about Cliff Swallows nesting in our region. We'd also like to hear of any central MA sightings of these swallows during migration in May. Please drop us a line if you spot these birds.

FACEBOOK AND WRNC

For those of you who enjoyed our Facebook presence for the past few years, thank you for looking and, we hope, learning. A great suggestion we received was to set up an account as a closed Group. That option would eliminate some of the negative aspects we've encountered. If we decide at some future date to re-open a Facebook account, it will be set up as a closed Group and will be announced in our newsletter. If you would like to volunteer to be the Administrator of such a group on behalf of the Club, contact warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com.

BLUE TRAIL GUIDE FOR WARE RIVER IS IN THE WORKS

The Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council is a recently-formed group which sees itself as a voice for the local rivers. The Council is in the process of developing a Blue Trail map guide for the Ware River. This guide will inform paddlers about both human and natural history on the river way--Hardwick/Wheelwright, through Gilbertville and Ware, and terminating in Palmer/Thorndike.



A Blue Trail (also known as water trail) is a dedicated stretch of river that enjoys special clean water safeguards and is a destination for fishing, boating and other recreation. Just as hiking trails are designed to help people explore the land, blue trails help people discover rivers. Blue trails provide a fun, exciting way to get kids outdoors, connect communities to treasured landscapes, and are economic drivers benefiting local businesses and quality of life. Blue Trails become a community resource.

If you are a paddler and would like to help with ideas for the trail guide, contact chicopeewatershed@gmail.com. To learn more: <https://c4rivers.org>

Ware River Nature Club

MAY SCAVENGER HUNT CHALLENGE

WHEN: From 7 a.m. Friday May 1st through 7 p.m. Thursday, May 7th

WHO: Individuals, twosomes, or trios maintaining recommended social distance.

HOW: Take your camera or mobile device with camera on outdoor walks anywhere in central MA—your backyard, neighborhood side streets, back roads, and parking lot edges; private or public hiking trails that are open to the public; cemeteries, etc. FIND AND PHOTOGRAPH AS MANY ITEMS ON THE LIST AS YOU CAN IN THE DESIGNATED WEEK. Make sure the time/date settings are recorded. The goal is to get as many points as possible. Maximum for this list: 77 points. Reduce the size of your photos (< 1 MB each) and send to warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com by midnight on Saturday, May 10th.

Top three scorers will be announced Wednesday, May 13th. For prizes, top scorers will be able to choose one book from among a variety of recently-acquired natural history titles.

GENERAL RULES:

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| 1) Don't include people in your photos. | 4) Practice healthy social distancing habits. |
| 2) Note the town in which each photo is taken. | 5) Do not disturb wildlife. |
| 3) Respect private property | 6) Tread lightly on the earth. Take only pictures, leave only footprints. |

HAVE FUN!

	<u># OF POINTS</u>
• Trailing arbutus/Mayflower (<i>Epigaea repens</i>) flower	2
With pollinating insect	8
This insect identified	+2
• Tree trunk showing recent woodpecker (NOT Pileated) excavation/nesthole	5
Hairy Woodpecker	4
• Painted turtle (<i>Chrysemys picta</i>)	3
• Broom forkmoss (<i>Dicranum scoparium</i>)	6
• White-tailed deer droppings	2
• Sweet white violet (<i>Viola blanda</i>)	3
• Red squirrel	3
Cone debris pile (midden) created by red squirrel	
Small (one to few cones)	5
Large (accumulated over months)	10
• A warbler, any species	7
• Shadbush/Serviceberry (<i>Amelanchier</i>) in bloom	2
• Early season dragonfly	3
This dragonfly identified	+7
• Bracket fungi (<i>Polypore</i>)	4
• Spring Azure butterfly	6

Athol Bird & Nature Club and Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust

Webinar

**AN INTRODUCTION TO OBSERVING AND IDENTIFYING
DRAGONFLIES AND DAMSELFLIES**

Wednesday May 13th 7 p.m.

Join Athol Bird and Nature Club president Dave Small for a 1 hour +/- presentation titled. This presentation is geared for the beginner but will be a good refresher for more experienced observers. Dave will begin with a discussion on the origins and life history of these insects and then take a look at the families encountered in Massachusetts with some hints on where to find them. The timing of this presentation is designed to help participants get ready for the beginning of dragonfly emergence in Mid-May.

A link to the meeting will be posted when available.

<https://atholbirdclub.org/abnc-events/>

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Wildlands Trust

**Zoom via Internet > BIRDS OF SPRING**

**with Wayne Petersen**

**Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup> 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.**

Join renowned ornithologist Wayne Petersen live on Zoom to learn about the fascinating birds that migrate through our area in the spring. All birders are welcome, and if you don't consider yourself a "birder", there's never been a better time to start. From song birds to raptors, there is plenty to see and hear in the great outdoors!

**How do I join this program?**

**Option 1: Join and participate live on Zoom on Thursday, May 14 at 7:00 pm.**

<https://wildlandstrust.org/events/birds-of-spring-2020>

**Option 2: Watch Recording Later**

If you cannot attend the live program or choose not to, the program will be recorded and shared on our website. You do not need to register for this option; just keep an eye on our website [wildlandstrust.org/events](https://wildlandstrust.org/events)

# 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.

We hope you will remain well and be at peace. Let's encourage friends and family with contact by phone, e-mail, texts, Instagram. When the virus has passed we look forward to gathering with you again for outdoor events.

## FORBUSH BIRD CLUB

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

All **MASS AUDUBON** sanctuaries, trails, and buildings are closed until further notice.

<https://www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/explore-nature-at-home/all-mass-audubon-sanctuaries-trails-buildings-are-closed-until-further-notice>

**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>