



* * * ANNOUNCEMENTS * * *

NESTBOX REPORT: HIGH RIDGE WMA & MOORE STATE PARK

When it comes to maintenance, repair, and/or replacement of nestboxes and mounting posts, Ware River Nature Club is fortunate to be able to call on John and Kathy Egan for help. For the 2020 nesting season, we increased the workload for these trusty volunteers by installing new nestboxes at Moore State Park in Paxton. In addition, we continued the ongoing maintenance of the extensive nestbox trail at High Ridge Wildlife Management Area in Westminster. In spite of the additional challenge of practicing safe health protocols, our team managed to complete all the necessary work of cleaning and stabilizing all boxes, with an eye towards revisiting the sites in the spring to clean up after mouse tenants and fixing any damage occurring over the winter. Many thanks to John and Kathy!

At Moore State Park, we were unable to find anyone to monitor the boxes throughout the nesting season, but we received occasional reports from birders who noted that Tree Swallows and Eastern Bluebirds were using some of them. This was confirmed when we did the fall cleaning, but without regular observation throughout the season we have no access to details. We'll be seeking a volunteer monitor for 2021. Please let us know if you might be able to help.

The network of boxes at High Ridge WMA is more extensive, and regular surveillance by a volunteer monitor there would be welcome, too. The fall maintenance and clean-up visit did reveal a couple of interesting observations, though.

Mass Wildlife staff had removed extensive amounts of invasive vegetation and overgrown weeds from certain sections of the WMA a couple of seasons ago, and as a result the pressure on the nestboxes by House Wrens seems to be somewhat reduced. There is still a healthy population of wrens at this end of the WMA, as evidenced by the number of both real and "dummy" twig nests filling many nestboxes, but the number of affected boxes seemed to be reduced.

Also, judging from used nests found in the boxes, we could tell that 1) occupancy had increased over previous years (fewer empty boxes); and 2) bluebirds and swallows had utilized more boxes and successfully fledged young in most cases. We would much more prefer to have someone “on the ground” keeping an eye on these nestboxes in 2021. Please be in touch at warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com if you’re interested.

WINTER FINCH FORECAST

“The 2020-21 Winter Finch Forecast is out and it looks like it could be an exciting next several months in New England.” This is the lead-in to a great summary by Chris Bosak of New Hampshire in *The Weirs Times*. Read about the famous winter finch forecast that birders await each fall here: <https://weirs.com/the-2020-21-winter-finch-forecast/>

Although the finch forecast is generated in Canada and makes references to expected species irruptions and dispersals across that country, a great deal about bird movements in New England can be extrapolated from the forecast. Have you noticed more Purple Finches and Pine Siskins while watching your feeders or out birding? Find out why by reading the entire forecast: <https://finchnetwork.org/winter-finch-forecast-2020>

USING ZOOM IS EASY!

You are not alone if you are still uncertain about viewing one of our guest speakers via a ZOOM “meeting.” It’s easier than you might think.

If you have never used ZOOM and wish to see a program, you can join by clicking the meeting link or going to join.zoom.us and entering in the meeting ID. You will be prompted to download the ZOOM application, which is a fast download. You can “enter a meeting,” i.e. view the presentation even if you don’t have a video camera (built-in to your monitor or as a separate device), but of course you’ll have to have your speakers enabled. If you have video capability, you can choose to be visible to others or not. You can choose whether to remain mute or to participate verbally. Another option is to “chat” with the host by typing comments or questions.

If you want to try a short meeting for practice, contact warerivernatureclub@yahoo.com. We have an account and can set up a meeting with you. Once you’ve tried it out, you may consider taking advantage of the fun and interesting programs being offered by WRNC and other bird and nature clubs.

* * *

UPCOMING EVENTS

* * *

PRINCETON HIKES!

HEYWOOD RESERVOIR & DEVIL'S PULPIT STERLING

Saturday October 24th 9 a.m.

This will be an easy-to-moderate 5-mile hike around the reservoir
and up to Rocky Hill and the Devil's Pulpit.

Dogs ARE permitted on short leash.

Registration is REQUIRED. Please contact trailaroundprincetonma@gmail.com if you would like
to join and get meet-up instructions, OR if you change your mind!

COVID rules require masks at all stops and 6 feet of distancing.

Please wear hunter orange or something bright-colored.



WARE RIVER NATURE CLUB

ZOOM Webinar

TANZANIA:

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S JOURNEY

with Shawn Carey

Wednesday October 28th 7 p.m.

East Africa evokes images of vast grasslands teeming with exotic animals. Enormous herds of wildebeests, zebras, antelopes, and gazelles graze under the watchful eyes of Africa's great predators. It is nature at its most wild. In a region abundant with wildlife, perhaps no country is as celebrated as Tanzania. Home to the world famous Ngorongoro



Crater and Serengeti National Park, Tanzania is a nature enthusiast's paradise.

For this special presentation, join wildlife photographer Shawn Carey on an adventure into the heart of Tanzania. We'll take a safari vehicle into the country's spectacular national parks and see the "Big Five" – African Elephant, Black Rhino, Cape Buffalo, Lion, and Leopard – in all their glory. Along the way, we'll search for and photograph Cheetahs, Giraffes, Black-backed Jackals, and Hippos. And we'll encounter a panoply of Tanzania's wonderful and amazing birds, including the Greater Flamingo, Lilac-breasted Roller, Little Bee-eater, Giant Kingfisher, and Grey-crowned Crane – the country's national bird.



If you've ever dreamed of visiting East Africa and its incredible wildlife, this is a journey you'll never forget. And it may just have you planning your own African adventure.

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://avfx.zoom.us/j/95763026635>

Meeting ID: 957 6302 6635
Waiting room opens: 6:30 p.m. Meeting begins: 7:00 p.m



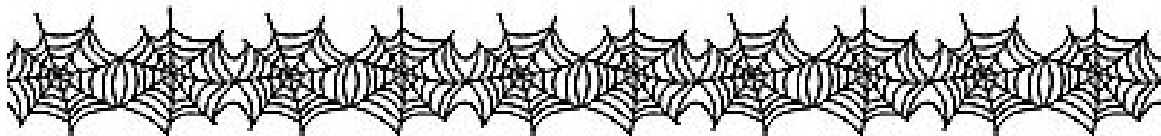
FORBUSH BIRD CLUB

HALLOWEEN BIRDING AT WORCESTER'S CEMETERIES

**Saturday October 31st
8 a.m. – noon**

**Leader: John Shea (508-667-1982)
[john@beachwells.com]**

**Meet inside the entrance to Hope
Cemetery at 8:00 a.m.
to see what's haunting the cemeteries
on Halloween.**



SAVE THE DATES

EXPLORING LITTLE-KNOWN TRAILS Nature observation walk at an infrequently-explored location (TBD) Sunday, November 15th

RESEARCH UPDATE: WHIP-POOR-WILL MIGRATION CONNECTIVITY

Zoom presentation by Marja Bakermans Wednesday, November 18th 7 p.m.