



Friends of the Middlesex Fells Reservation

www.fells.org 781-662-2340 **Events Calendar pullout: pages 5-10**

News of the Fells Fall 2012

DCR demolition challenged by Conservation Commission



Fells Reservoir Trail rock steps in March (left), reduced to a pile of rubble in July (right)
(Photos: Mike Ryan)

On August 3rd, looking out over the piles of rubble where the Reservoir Trail rock stairs once stood, Stoneham conservation commissioners were incredulous. They asked the two rangers why DCR had broken its promise to get prior approval for a work plan.

One commissioner exclaimed, "It seems underhanded, that all of a sudden this trail is destroyed."

The state Wetlands Protection Act empowers local conservation commissions to regulate potential impacts to wetland resources.

continued on page 12



April 29 — Ed Myskowski leads Long Pond geology hike for Stoneham Cub Scouts. (Christine Kerans)

Youth Discovering the Fells

Bryan Hamlin

THE FRIENDS WERE BUSY THIS SPRING AND SUMMER WITH unprecedented requests from school and youth groups seeking assistance for visits to the Fells Reservation. Studies have shown that young children have an innate need and desire to relate to the natural world. So we at the Friends were thrilled with new requests to help young people have an opportunity to explore nature in the Fells.

The result is that over three hundred youngsters between the ages of 8 and 18 have taken instructional hikes in the Fells, including groups from the Stoneham Cub Scouts, Medford's Andrews Middle School, the Malden YMCA summer camp program, and the Eagle Eye Institute of Somerville.

continued on next page



1 July 3 — 100 Malden YMCA Summer Camp participants explore Long Pond Nature Trail, led by four Friends of the Fells volunteers. 2 July 11 — Eagle Eye group pulling garlic mustard in Virginia Wood. 3 Bryan Hamlin discusses Virginia Wood natural features with July 11 Eagle Eye participants. 4 June 29 — Eagle Eye Institute Kick Off Party at Spot Pond which included a nature and history walk led by Walter Kittredge and Mike Ryan. Walter shown addressing walk participants. 5 Eagle Eye Spot Pond party participant measuring 250 year old sugar maple tree. 6 July 6 — Eagle Eye nature hike and stewardship group in Virginia Wood at Spot Pond Brook (All photos Mike Ryan except no. 6, Walter Kittredge)

Youth Discovering the Fells

continued from front cover

The first such hike was in late April when expert geologist Ed Myskowski led a group of Cub Scouts to learn about the varied geology of the Fells. Ed reported, “We began at the Long Pond parking lot with an introduction to igneous rocks and the rock cycle, and concluded at the peak of Squaw Sachem Hill with a review of the topics for the day, which also covered glacial geology, plate tectonics, and geologic time.”

Towards the end of its term, Andrews Middle School in Medford brought its English as a Second Language students to the Fells where I had the pleasure of leading twenty five teenagers, mainly from Brazil and Haiti, on a two hour nature hike in the Fells.

Throughout the summer the Malden Y participated in a series of Fells nature hikes, each one involving one hundred kids. The Friends of the Fells worked closely with Y and DCR staff to help coordinate and lead these hikes, which took place at different Fells locations. This marked the first time the Malden YMCA has utilized the Fells for its extensive summer camp programming.

The Friends were excited to partner with Somerville based Eagle Eye Institute. This was also this organization’s first programming in the Fells. For several decades Eagle Eye’s mission has been “dedicated to empowering urban people from low income communities, especially

youth of color, to play a positive role in caring for our environment.” Working with Eagle Eye program manager Christina Oliva, the Friends helped lead two Fells ‘Learn About Forests’ youth activities, which included environmental education, stewardship and career building. On one hike Walter Kittredge introduced participants to wintergreen flavored twigs of what they called the “Root Beer tree” (Sweet Birch), and taught them how to measure the height of a tree with a laser range finder. Christina’s forest scavenger hunt game proved to be both fun and educational.

The stewardship aspect of the Eagle Eye youth hikes at Virginia Wood included trail clearing and removing invasive garlic mustard plants to re-open the forest for native plant growth. Through Eagle Eye’s sponsorship, youth from the Mystic Mural Project and Mystic Learning Center learned about nature and forests in the Fells Reservation.

The Friends has been encouraged by the upsurge in Fells youth programming this summer, and we look forward to working closely with our new collaborative partners to expand ways in which the Fells Reservation can serve as a fun and educational experience for young people.

Bryan Hamlin is board chair of the Friends of the Fells

A Walk in the Woods for Young Adult Cancer Patients

By Rosemary Mosco

When I was diagnosed with cancer in my 20s, my world turned upside down. I put all of my career plans on hold – being a patient became my full-time job. During this time I often went for walks in the woods. Accessible local green space played an important role in my recovery; few things made me feel more connected to the world outside the hospital than the songs of warblers or the smell of fall leaves.

On May 19th, I had the honor of sharing this connection with patients from the Young Adult Program at Dana-Farber. Environmental educator Kristen Hoffman and I led a walk along a gentle trail by Greenwood Park. The attendees had diverse backgrounds and treatment histories, but everyone brought their curiosity and enthusiasm for an afternoon spent outdoors. It didn't hurt

that the weather was sunny and mild – pretty much perfect!

Kristen and I chose the five senses as the theme for our walk. We listened for warbler calls, explored the varied texture of bark, and inhaled the minty scent of black birch twigs. We tasted maple candy while learning to distinguish different tree species. The local wildlife put on a show for us; woodpeckers drilled, chipmunks chirped, and a red-tailed hawk alighted right next to the trail.

As we said our goodbyes and the attendees reluctantly left the sunny lawn at Greenwood Park, I reflected on the importance of resources like the Middlesex Fells. Even when life throws curve balls, wild places can help people thrive.

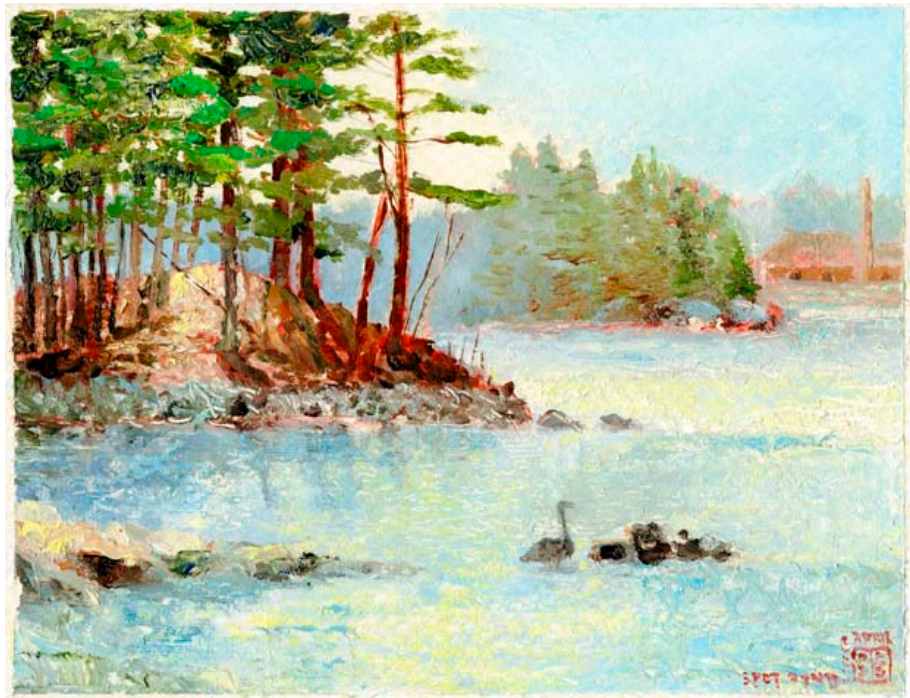
September is Fells Arts Month

This September, the splendor of the Middlesex Fells will be on display at the **Beebe Estate**, 235 West Foster St, Melrose. This year's show features art by over 20 artists from Malden, Melrose, Medford and Lowell displaying their love of the Fells through painting, photography, fiber arts, and collages.

As part of the show, the Medford Historical Society will be displaying three of **George Davenport's historic Fells photographs** taken in the 1880s.

Also for this year, we will be offering a children's art program entitled **Making Art through Nature**. Using natural materials, participants will construct objects of art. The free program is limited to 10 children per class. To reserve a spot, call 781-662-2340.

Fells Arts Month kicks off with a reception on Friday, September 7 from 7pm-9pm. You don't want to miss this fun evening of food, music and art. The gallery will be open on Saturdays from 11am-3pm and on Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment. In addition we will be inviting groups to come see the show. If you are part of a group or know of one that would be interested, give us a call.



Spot Pond, painting by Adrian Johnston

Other events held at the Beebe Estate throughout the month include:

Conversations with the artists on Saturdays.

Children's Art classes 11am-1pm
Adrian Johnston, Sept. 8 and 22
Ingeborg Burggraf, Sept. 15 and 29

Round the Middlesex Fells, an historic talk and video with Mike Ryan and Bob Ghika, Sept. 10, 7pm.

Fells area five Chamber of Commerce event Monday, Sept. 24 6pm.

Check www.fells.org for updates.


Thoreau comes to Medford and the Middlesex Fells!

By Corrine Smith and Kyna Hamill

HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817-1862) was a complex individual, known as an author, a philosopher, a naturalist, an abolitionist, and a Transcendentalist. While he wrote his “Civil Disobedience” essay after spending a night in jail for failing to pay the state poll tax, he is most well-known for his social experiment of simplified living in the woods on the outskirts of Concord for “two years, two months and two days” between 1845-47 as chronicled in his book, *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*.

Though he claimed that he had “travelled a good deal in Concord,” his home town, Thoreau often journeyed into surrounding towns and throughout the landscape of central New England. On January 22, 1851, Thoreau delivered a lecture in Medford on his insights into his Walden experience, a lecture that would become the section on “Economy” in *Walden*, published three years later.

We have no proof that Thoreau visited what is now known as the Middlesex Fells that day, or at any other time in his life. But we believe that he would approve of its existence and its preservation. Through the services



Richard Smith as Henry David Thoreau
(Courtesy Richard Smith)

of historical interpreter Richard Smith, ‘Mr. Henry David Thoreau’ will stroll through Middlesex Fells on September 8, 2012, from 1-3 p.m. This family-friendly hike invites you to meet Mr. Thoreau and ask ques-

“I think that each town should have a park, or rather a primitive forest, of five hundred or a thousand acres, either in one body or several – where a stick should never be cut for fuel – nor for the navy, nor to make wagons, but stand and decay for higher uses – a common possession forever, for instruction and recreation.


*Henry David Thoreau
from “Huckleberries”*

tions about what it was like to live in the woods in the nineteenth century, and what he thinks of the Fells Reservation!

The hike begins at 1 p.m. at Bellevue Pond on South Border Road. Since parking spaces are limited, please consider parking at Lawrence Memorial Hospital on Governors Avenue. If you park in the spaces furthest away from the entrance, you can walk along Massachusetts Avenue, off Governors Avenue just 10 minutes from Bellevue Pond.

This program, *Walking with Mr. Thoreau*, is part of a new trail-based outreach of the Freedom’s Way National Heritage Area, called “In Thoreau’s Footsteps.” *Walking with Mr. Thoreau* is funded by the Medford Arts Council, in partnership with the Medford Historical Society.

Corrine Smith is a poet and writer, Kyna Hamill is co-president of the Medford Historical Society



FALL 2012 HIKES & EVENTS

All hikes are free to the public and do not require pre-registration

SEPTEMBER

Hike the Southern Fells

Saturday, September 1

10:00am - 12:30pm

Leader: Dan Sumorok. Join Dan on a hiking tour of the southernmost part of the Fells on the Skyline, Reservoir, and Cross Fells trails. This walk will end with a visit to Pine Hill and Wright's Tower, where the view includes Medford, Boston, and the Blue Hills in the distance. The trails are steep and rocky in places. Wear sturdy boots and bring at least a liter of water. Meet at the Bellevue Pond parking area, South Border Rd., Medford. Rain cancels.

Summer Wildflowers at Virginia Wood

Friday, September 7

9:00am - 11:30am

Leader: Boot Boutwell. We will walk along Spot Pond Brook focusing on plants in flower and plants in fruit. We will talk about plant identification as well as interesting natural history. Meet in the driveway of #1 Woodland Road at the intersection of Woodland Road and Pond Street in Stoneham. Steady rain cancels. For more information call Boot at 781-729-4712.

Henry David Thoreau Fells Walk

Saturday, Sept. 8

1:00pm - 3:00pm

Leader: Richard Smith as Thoreau.
(See opposite page for all details.)

Bird Habitat Walk on the Rock Circuit Trail:

Sunday September 16

10:00am - Noon

Leader: Pete Costello of Zoo New England. Join Pete for a family-friendly walk to explore and discuss bird habitats, nests and animal signs in the Fells. Walking will be Easy to Moderate. Bring water, binoculars, sunscreen and bug repellent. Meet at 10:00am at the Flynn Rink parking area on Woodland Rd.

in Stoneham. Rain Cancels. Email Pete at pbearl@yahoo.com for more information.

September Wildflowers at Bellevue Pond

Tuesday, September 18

9:00am - 11:30am

Leader: Boot Boutwell. There are still plenty of wildflowers about to brighten up the landscape. We'll talk about the plants in bloom as well as other plants of interest. The walk will focus on plant 10 as well as fun and interesting natural history about the plants which we see. Meet at the Bellevue Pond parking lot on South Border Rd in Medford. Steady rain cancels. For more information call Boot at 781-729-4712.

CELEBRATE THE AUTUMNAL EQUINOX

Monday, September 17 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Botume House, 4 Woodland Road, Stoneham (on the shore of Spot Pond)
Autumn arrives with the Autumnal Equinox, one of two days during the year when days and nights are of equal length everywhere on earth. Celebrate the approaching equinox with Boot Boutwell and the Friends of the Fells. After introductions, we will go outdoors for a nature walk and watch the sun set. Our celebration will continue as we learn about seasonal variations and enjoy poetry, readings and a short ceremony. Refreshments provided! **NOTE: Pre-registration is required: Call Boot Boutwell to register at 781-729-4712. Enrollment is limited.**

A Frondness for Ferns

Sunday, September 23

1:00pm – 3:00pm

Leader: Rosemary Mosco. What's so sensitive about the Sensitive Fern, and who's interrupting the Interrupted Fern? Naturalist and fern enthusiast Rosemary Mosco will introduce some of the ferns of the Fells and talk about their habitat requirements. Beginner botanists are welcome! This gentle walk meets at the Greenwood Park parking lot, across from the Stone Zoo. Heavy rain or lightning cancels.

Photo: Cinnamon Fern (*Bryan Hamlin*)



Serve the Fells for National Public Lands Day

Saturday September 29

9:00am – 3:00pm

Leader: Rich Sanford. Fells supporters of all ages are invited to join in a day of service at the Fells in

conjunction with National Public Lands Day and COASTSWEEP. Experienced Fells hike leaders will lead trail cleanups, habitat restoration, and trail maintenance hikes at various sites throughout the Fells Reservation. Meet at Flynn Rink (300 Elm St., Medford) between 9am and 9:30am to register and receive your work assignment. Groups are welcome. Work the morning only or bring a lunch and continue into the afternoon. Please bring water, snacks, sunscreen and/or bug spray to suit your needs. Lightning cancels, otherwise please dress for the weather. Call Rich at 617-335-7310 or email rich_sanford@alum.mit.edu for more information.

OCTOBER

Hike the Southern Fells

Saturday, October 6

10:00am – 12:30pm

Leader: Dan Sumorok. Join Dan on a hiking tour of the southernmost part of the Fells on the Skyline, Reservoir, and Cross Fells trails. This walk will end with a visit to Pine Hill and Wright's Tower, where the view includes Medford, Boston, and the Blue Hills in the distance. The trails are steep and rocky in places. Wear sturdy boots and bring at least a liter of water. Meet at the Bellevue Pond parking area, South Border Rd., Medford. Rain cancels.

Autumn Colors

Saturday, October 13

10:00am – Noon

Leader: Bryan Hamlin. Join Bryan for autumn exploration of the region of the eastern Fells. The planned route will highlight the ecology of the natural areas bordering the old hospital site. Meet at the

Flynn Rink parking lot, Medford. Rain cancels.

Babes in the Woods Celebration at Beebe Estate!

Saturday, October 13

3:30pm – 5:30pm

Join the "Babes in the Woods" and "Friends of the Middlesex Fells" groups for a party at the Beebe Estate, celebrating the wildlife of the Middlesex Fells!

We'll have book readings, craft tables, and snacks to fortify future hikers — both young and old! Dress up as your favorite pond or woodland animal, or bring a plushie of an animal you might find in the Fells!

The event is free to all but donations towards supporting the Babes in the Woods program are welcome and appreciated. The Beebe Estate is located at 235 West Foster Street, Melrose.

Bird Habitat Walk on the Rock Circuit Trail

Sunday October 14

10:00am – Noon

Leader: Pete Costello of Zoo New England. Join Pete for a family-friendly walk to explore and discuss bird habitats, nests and animal signs in the Fells. Walking will be Easy to Moderate. Bring water, binoculars, sunscreen and bug repellent. Meet at 10:00am at the Flynn Rink parking area on Woodland Rd. in Stoneham. Rain Cancels. Email Pete at pbeararl@yahoo.com for more information.

Restoration Hike near Grinding Rock Hill

Saturday, October 20

9:00am – Noon

Leader: Walter Kittredge. Join Walter and DCR staff for a short hike and habitat restoration in the Fells. There will be an introduction to native plant habitats, and training in how to identify invasive

woody shrubs and vines, which will be removed by digging them out. Volunteers are also needed to help with the lighter work of carrying and stacking brush. Gloves, tools, and verification of two community service hours will be provided. Meet on Hillcrest Parkway near gate 18. Rain cancels.

Autumn at Long Pond

Tuesday, October 23

9:00am - 11:30am

Leader: Boot Boutwell. We will take a walk to Long Pond searching for late blooming flowers and plants still in fruit. The walk will focus on plant identification as well as fun and interesting natural history. Perhaps we'll see a few witches and

skeletons left over from Halloween! Meet at the Long Pond parking lot on South Border Rd in Winchester. Steady rain cancels. For more information, call Boot Boutwell at 781-729-4712.

Bird Observation Walk

Friday, Oct. 26

8:00am - 10:00am

Leaders: Dana Jewell & Ingeborg Burggraf. We'll look for birds as they migrate south and others settling in for the coming winter. This can be a good time to find unusual local birds. Bring binoculars. Meet at the Greenwood Park parking lot on Pond St., Stoneham, across the street from the Stone Zoo. Rain cancels.

Family Foliage Hike on the Rock Circuit Trail

Saturday October 27

10:00am - 2:00pm

Leaders: Rich and Eric Sanford. Families are welcome to join experienced Fells hike leaders Rich and Eric (age 8) for an autumn hike in the Fells. We'll enjoy colorful fall Foliage and views of the Boston skyline as we circumnavigate the Rock Circuit Trail (3.7 miles. Average hiking time: 4.5 hours). Meet at 10:00am sharp at the parking area near gate 53 on Fellsway East, Melrose. Please bring water, a lunch or snack, sunscreen and bug spray. Heavy Rain or Lightning cancels. Call Rich at 617-335-7310 or email rich_sanford@alum.mit.edu for more information.

NOVEMBER

Hike the Southern Fells

Saturday, November 3

10:00am - 12:30pm

Leader: Dan Sumorok. Join Dan on a hiking tour of the southernmost part of the Fells on the Skyline, Reservoir, and Cross Fells trails. This walk will end with a visit to Pine Hill and Wright's Tower, where the view includes Medford, Boston, and the Blue Hills in the distance. The trails are steep and rocky in places. Wear sturdy boots and bring at least a liter of water. Meet at the Bellevue Pond parking area, South Border Rd., Medford. Rain cancels.

Bird Habitat Walk on the Rock Circuit Trail

Sunday November 4

10:00am - Noon

Leader: Pete Costello of Zoo New England. Join Pete for a family-

friendly walk to explore and discuss bird habitats, nests and animal signs in the Fells. Walking will be Easy to Moderate. Bring water, binoculars, sunscreen and bug repellent. Meet at 10:00am at the Flynn Rink parking area on Woodland Rd. in Stoneham. Rain Cancels. Email Pete at pbearar1@yahoo.com for more information.

Hike 'n' Carry in the Southern Fells

Sunday November 4

2:00pm - 4:00pm

Leader: Linda Schwetz. Join Linda for an all-ages hike and trail clean-up in the vicinity of Panther Cave. Bags, gloves, and verification of two community service hours will be provided. Meet at 2:00 sharp at the Parking Area across from Jeremiah Circle, on South Border Road in

Medford. Rain cancels. Call Linda at 617-803-3173 for more information.

Virginia Wood in Late Autumn

Wednesday, November 7

9:00am - 11:30am

Leader: Boot Boutwell. We'll walk through Virginia Wood looking at the natural world as it prepares for winter. Will we see a few late blooming flowers? Will we find a few deciduous trees still hanging onto their leaves? Come along and find out! The walk will focus on plant identification as well as fun and interesting natural history. Meet in the driveway parking lot of 1 Woodland Road, at the intersection of Woodland Road and Pond Street in Stoneham. Steady rain cancels. For more information, call Boot Boutwell at 781-729-4712.

BABES IN THE WOODS

TUESDAY HIKES

All hikes are from
10:00am to 11:30am

September 4

Bellevue Pond to Panther Cave

Meet at the Bellevue Pond parking lot, South Border Rd., Medford.

September 11

Spot Pond Stroll

Meet at the DCR Botume House Visitor Center, 4 Woodland Rd., Stoneham. Parking is also available next door at Spot Pond Boating.

September 18

Escape to Silver Mine

Meet at the Sheepfold parking lot, off Fellsway West/Route 28, Stoneham.

September 25

Long Pond Nature Trail

Meet at the Long Pond parking lot, South Border Rd., Winchester.

October 2

Crystal Spring to Virginia Wood

Meet at the Greenwood Park parking lot, Pond St., Stoneham across from the Stone Zoo.

October 9

Sheepfold to Bear Hill

Meet at the Sheepfold parking lot, off Fellsway West/Route 28, Stoneham



Babes in the Woods fall hike with Terry Murray (*Deepa Vemparala*)

October 16

Bellevue Pond to Panther Cave

Meet at the Bellevue Pond parking lot, South Border Rd., Medford.

October 23

Spot Pond Stroll

Meet at the DCR Botume House Visitor Center, 4 Woodland Rd., Stoneham. Parking is also available next door at Spot Pond Boating.

October 30

Escape to Silver Mine

Meet at the Sheepfold parking lot, off Fellsway West/Route 28, Stoneham. Wear Halloween costumes!

November 6

Long Pond Nature Trail

Meet at the Long Pond parking lot, South Border Rd., Winchester.

November 13

Bellevue Pond to Pine Hill

Meet at the Bellevue Pond parking lot, South Border Rd., Medford.

November 20

Crystal Spring to Virginia Wood

Meet at the Greenwood Park parking lot, Pond St., Stoneham across from the Stone Zoo.

November 27

Sheepfold to Bear Hill

Meet at the Sheepfold parking lot, off Fellsway West/Route 28, Stoneham.

THURSDAY HIKES

All hikes are from
10:00am to 11:30am

September 6

North Reservoir Exploration

Meet at Gate 18, Hillcrest Parkway,
Winchester.

September 13

Ramshead Hill Adventure

Meet at Gate 9, South Border Road,
Medford.

September 20

Bear Hill Exploration

Meet at Gate 21, Fallon Road,
Stoneham

September 27

Cascade Adventure

Meet at Gate 53, Fellsway East,
Melrose

October 4

Molly's Spring Road Adventure

Meet at Gate 13, South Border Road,
Winchester

October 11

Nanepashemet Hill Exploration

Meet at Gate 16 Hillcrest Parkway,
Winchester

October 18

Bellevue Pond to Pine Hill and more

Meet at Bellevue Pond parking area,
South Border Road, Medford

October 25

North Reservoir Exploration

Meet at Gate 18, Hillcrest Parkway,
Winchester.

November 1

High Service Reservoirs

Meet at Gate 53, Fellsway East,
Melrose

November 8

Long Pond Exploration

Meet at Gate 13, South Border Road,
Winchester

November 15

Bear Hill Exploration

Meet at Gate 21, Fallon Road,
Stoneham

November 22

North Reservoir Exploration

Meet at Gate 18, Hillcrest Parkway,
Winchester.

November 29

Bellevue Pond and Beyond

Meet at Bellevue Pond parking area,
South Border Road, Medford

SATURDAY HIKES

All hikes are from
10:00am to 11:30am

September 1

Long Pond Nature Trail

Meet at the Long Pond parking lot,
South Border Rd., Winchester.

September 8

Crystal Spring to Virginia Wood

Meet at the Greenwood Park
parking lot, Pond St., Stoneham
across from the Stone Zoo.

September 15

Sheepfold to Bear Hill

Meet at the Sheepfold parking
lot, off Fellsway West/Route 28,
Stoneham

September 22

Spot Pond Stroll

Meet at the DCR Botume House
Visitor Center, 4 Woodland Rd.,
Stoneham. Parking is also available
next door at Spot Pond Boating.

September 29

Long Pond Exploration

Meet at the Long Pond parking lot,
South Border Rd., Winchester.

October 6

Woodland Path Trail east or west

Meet at Flynn Rink, Woodland Road,
Medford

October 13

Sheepfold and Beyond

Meet at the Sheepfold parking
lot, off Fellsway West/Route 28,
Stoneham

October 20

Spot Pond Stroll

Meet at the DCR Botume House
Visitor Center, 4 Woodland Rd.,
Stoneham. Parking is also available
next door at Spot Pond Boating.

October 27

Crystal Spring to Virginia Wood

Meet at the Greenwood Park
parking lot, Pond St., Stoneham
across from the Stone Zoo.

November 3

Long Pond Nature Trail

Meet at the Long Pond parking lot,
South Border Rd., Winchester.

November 10

Woodland Path Trail east or west

Meet at Flynn Rink, Woodland Road,
Medford

November 17

Sheepfold and Beyond

Meet at the Sheepfold parking
lot, off Fellsway West/Route 28,
Stoneham

November 24

Spot Pond Exploration

Meet at the DCR Botume House
Visitor Center, 4 Woodland Rd.,
Stoneham. Parking is also available
next door at Spot Pond Boating.

What is Babes in the Woods?

Are you home on mornings with young children? Come for a walk in the woods with Friends of the Middlesex Fells hike leader Terry Murray. (Find more info on Terry on his website, terrytheinventormentor.com) The walks occur every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 10:00am to 11:30am. Rain or snow cancels. No dogs please.

For all hikes, there is a drop-in format — no pre-registration is required. *Hikes are always free, but we encourage you to become a Friends of the Fells Member to help support these programs.* See more detailed hike descriptions below:

Tuesdays: Babes Classic

A stroller-friendly meander through the Fells. Children of all ages are welcome, whether they are hanging out in a carrier, kicking back in a stroller, or tromping through the woods on their own two feet. Terry will point out interesting sights and sounds unique to that day's trail, and there will be a mid-hike break for snacks and fun. When it's warm, Terry loves to show off his giant bubble wands!

Thursdays: Adventure Babes

These hikes are not stroller-friendly, and children should either be in carriers or able to keep an adult pace through mixed terrain. We will take the trail less traveled, and break a sweat. A shorter break will allow a little time to rest and refuel.

Saturdays: Family Babes/Babes for Dads

Are your school-aged kids or working spouse envious of all the weekly fun you have on our other Babes outings?

Have them join you on the weekend edition of our hikes. Like Tuesdays, kids of any age are welcome, however, programming will be targeted to 5 to 8-year olds who can't join us during the week.

Once per month, the Saturday hikes will be just for Dads; get goofy in the woods and spend some quality time with your kids (and give Mom a break!).

For convenience you may download and fill out the annual liability release form at www.fells.org/babesform.pdf and see link in the third paragraph. Please fill out and give to Terry at your next hike.

Babes in the Woods is co-sponsored by the Friends of the Middlesex Fells, the Medford Family Network, the North Suburban Family Network, the Malden/Everett Family Network, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Questions?

Call the Friends at 781-662-2340, or go to www.fells.org.

We need your help:

Design a logo for Babes!

The "Babes in the Woods" hiking program, organized and sponsored by the Friends of the Middlesex Fells Reservation, is looking for a logo. We want to spread the word about this amazing program that provides guided Fells hikes to families in the Greater Boston area!

The logo will be printed on garments and bags (used to raise funds for the Babes program), as well as on announcements and fund-raising pamphlets.

The designer of the winning entry will be given a front-page mention in the Friends of the Fells newsletter, and will receive a gift basket full of items to help explore the Fells.

Selections from the entries will also be displayed in an online exhibition on the Friends website at: www.fells.org

You may participate with a maximum of 3 entries. Each work should be forwarded in a separate e-mail.

Please send your entries to: friends@fells.org with the heading: NEW BABES LOGO

Entries may be submitted through October 1, 2012.

See detailed design requirements at www.fells.org

Please Don't Mess Up Mother Nature

By Linda Schwetz

You may have noticed that too often people are disrespectful of our natural resources and abusing the few remaining natural places such as the Middlesex Fells Reservation.

Looking along any tree-lined road or even path in the woods so many are littered with plastic water bottles, soda & beer cans, or fast food carnage? "Those people!" Well. Sadly, those people aren't going to clean it up. So lets take a stand! We can influence our children and

friends that it's ok to clean up after those who have not yet "caught on" to the importance of caring for our natural surroundings.

If you're out in the Fells, consider taking along one of those plastic grocery store bags and pick some trash up, especially around the parking lots. If you see someone dropping "stuff" let him or her know they forgot something! And please DON'T throw doggy poop bags in the woods. Be relentless. Let oth-

ers know. Bring your kids, friends, neighbors, on a Hike and Carry walk — to enjoy new Fells trails and help clean up. This situation is only as hopeless as we let it be. Lets be friends with the Fells. Mother Nature will thank us all.

Linda is co-leader of Friends of the Fells Hike 'n' Carry Fells clean up program. See calendar section for opportunities to join others in keeping the Fells beautiful.

Dead Man's Fingers

By Walter Kittredge



Watching a torrent of rain I was excited by the flush of mushrooms it would bring to the Fells. The tiny threads of mushroom mycelia grew all summer waiting for water to make the spore producing bodies we recognize as mushrooms.

Mushrooms generally have round caps on top of a stem, with spore producing slits (called gills) or pores underneath like the boletes, many of which are prized edibles. Polypore mushrooms grow on dead trees, like the thin gray-brown turkeytails, and the thick artist's conks that can be drawn on. My favorite edible polypore is hen-of-the-woods which makes a large fan of overlapping tan shelves at the base of trees. Unusual mushrooms with provocative names like dead man's fingers poke up white "fingers" which turn black, and bright yellow jelly fungi are called witch's butter.

Many people collect mushrooms in the Fells like the abundant and delicious honey cap, which grows on old oak stumps in large clusters. Mushrooms are a good source of B vitamins and minerals, and stimulate our immune systems. There are many poisonous mushrooms often called toadstools. Many tales about how to tell safe from poisonous mushrooms are simply not true. To be safe it's always best to go mushrooming with someone who is an expert.

While most mushrooms live on dead plant and animal material, some attack living organisms. Rusts and smuts feed on plant tissues making discolored round spots on leaves. Some parasitize insects, while others are cultivated by ants and termites. Fungi also infect animals causing respiratory problems like the White Nose disease devastating bats. As one of the primary decomposers, fungi take the dead debris of the world and break it down into usable food for the forest, while creating colorful and culinary delights for us.



FROM TOP: Dead Man's Fingers and Red Waxy Mushrooms
(Walter Kittredge)

DCR continues trail destruction continued from front cover

Concerned that DCR conversion work on the Reservoir Trail to bike access could impact wetland resources, the Stoneham conservation commission had convened an earlier April 7 site visit to the trail section lying above a series of rock stair steps. The commission confirmed the existence of bordering wetlands, and it was mutually agreed with the DCR rangers that it would only be necessary to remedy a short muddy section of the trail above the stone stairs.

On April 17 Deputy DCR commissioner Jack Murray emailed confirmation to the conservation commission that DCR would submit written plans prior to any work.

But on August 3rd, standing amid the scene of devastation, the commission wanted to know why DCR carried out trail work in violation of its written agreement, and what would justify the way the steps had been pulled up which left the trail subject to serious erosion and runoff into the wetland resource?

The two rangers had no response to the first question. Regarding the demolished trail they shifted the blame to a volunteer trail crew, the Student Conservation Association (SCA).

DCR Ranger: We weren't the ones... we didn't do the work...

Conservation Commission: Who did the work if not DCR?

DCR: The SCA crew.

Commission: There was no DCR person supervising?

DCR: I was assigned to them and I was supervising them.

Conservation: So then you did see it happening.

DCR: I wasn't there when they did the work. Staff members aren't assigned to work with the SCA crew. You give them instructions and they do the work.

But this account doesn't match an August 1 Medford Transcript news report that DCR had written that the steps were *intentionally* torn up. The article reported an email from DCR's press spokesperson, which said, "the stone steps, which were created in 2007 without DCR's consent, were dismantled."

Challenging DCR's charge that the trail steps were unauthorized, the Friends produced detailed documents verifying that the rock step section of the Reservoir Trail had been built as part of a 2004 DCR \$5000 trail restoration grant issued to the Friends of the Fells.

In an August 9 letter to the Melrose Free Press, DCR commissioner Edward Lambert offered a *third* rationale

for destruction of the stone stairs when he claimed the area was too eroded, "the removal of the steps will result in a restoration of the natural environment and allow for better water infiltration, substantially reducing the erosion," he wrote. This does not square with the professional assessment made by the Stoneham Conservation Commission which, as stated above, suggested only a small remediation measure.

DCR did not destroy the rock steps for the reasons the agency has given. Looking back to March 17 we see the real motive, when a combined DCR and New England Mountain Bike Association crew destroyed another rock stair section of the Reservoir Trail, in a wooded dry area west of Winthrop Hill. In both instances the purpose was to remove stone stairs that are impediments to mountain bike riders.

DCR is using "conservation" to obscure that its Reservoir Trail work is serving a single Fells visitor group, bike riders. DCR says its new policy is to reroute trails where they encounter wetland areas. But the Appalachian Mountain Club states that to minimize resource damage it is generally best to *reconstruct* rather than *relocate* a trail, and states that fixing drainage problems is the most common remedy, "With well-designed and well-constructed drainage, most trails can be very stable." AMC praises the use of rock stairs on fall line trails because "they provide a stable vertical rise on the trail." Both rock stair sections on the Reservoir Trail were well built by AMC standards with the assistance of AMC trail crews. There is no legitimate environmental reason for their removal.

Using the same "conservation" excuses DCR has already decommissioned sections of the Dark Hollow Pond Trail as the agency prepares to create as many as three new bike access trails in this extremely biodiverse area.

DCR has now promised the Stoneham conservation commission to repair the damage caused by destroying the rock stairs, to prevent erosion and runoff into the wetland area. The right solution would be to honor the integrity of the original construction of the rock stairs by restoring them to their prior condition, and for DCR to reopen both of the Reservoir Trail rock stair sections to hikers. In addition, DCR should reopen the Dark Hollow Pond Trail and restore rather than reroute areas of the trail. Cutting new trails for bike access through this biodiverse area would cause unnecessary environmental damage.

“...a man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone.”

Walden, Henry David Thoreau

HELP NOW: Donate to The Friends of The Middlesex Fells

Your contribution to the Friends of the Middlesex Fells will help preserve this priceless landscape for the enjoyment of this and future generations! We truly need your financial help in dealing with the proposed development which threatens the very essence of the Fells. Your support for Friends programs benefits Fells visitors of all ages.

Donation Levels

- \$1000 and above: Protector — my contribution is _____
- \$500-\$999: Advocate — my contribution is _____
- \$100-\$499: Conserver — my contribution is _____
- \$10-\$99: Associate — my contribution is _____

 Donate

In addition to mailing a check you may now contribute online! See the 'Donate' button on www.fells.org.

The Friends of the Middlesex Fells is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax-deductible. Check with your employer's Human Resources Department to see if they will match your gift.

JOIN US: Become a member of the Friends of the Middlesex Fells

- New Membership (includes trail map!) Renewal

Which level would you like to join?

- Life Member \$1,000 Sponsor \$100 Individual \$25 Corporate \$500
- Benefactor \$500 Supporter \$50 Senior \$15
- Patron \$200 Family \$25 Student \$15

All but \$50 of Life Memberships are tax-deductible. All but \$5 of Annual Memberships are tax-deductible.

Donate online, or make checks payable to the Friends of the Middlesex Fells and mail this form to:
Friends of the Middlesex Fells, 235 West Foster Street, Melrose, MA 02176

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Please print legibly.

Personal information is not released for any purpose.

Please add friends@fells.org to your email address book to prevent email blocking.

- Check here if you would like to receive the Friends of the Middlesex Fells volunteer opportunities questionnaire.

\$6 Trail Map with descriptions of the Fells geology, natural and cultural history, and plants and animals on the back

\$3 *Creation of the Middlesex Fells* by Michael Ryan, executive director, Friends of the Middlesex Fells

\$4 *The Middlesex Fells: An 1898 article* by William de las Casas

\$6 *Middlesex Fells Reservation 1998-99 Tracking Survey* by David W. Brown. 2008 Edition Condensed and Updated

\$18 Friends of Middlesex Fells Fox T-shirt (Please visit www.fells.org for details)

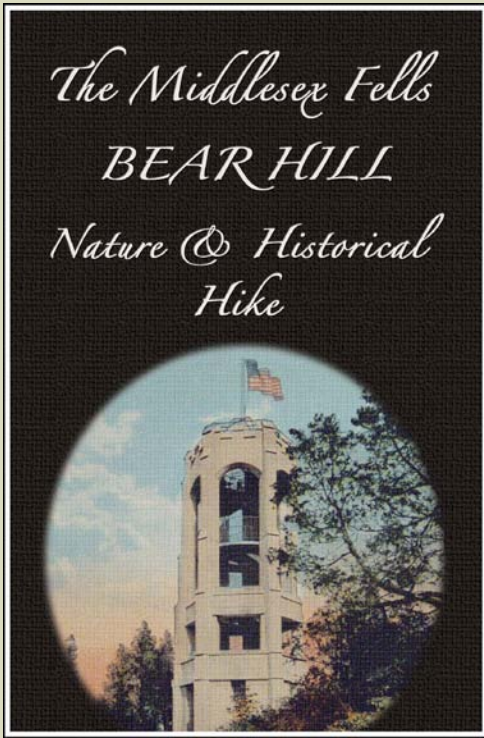
\$8 Pack of 4 Fells postcards: Lawrence Woods Pond, Spot Pond, Spot Pond Brook, Ravine Road Hemlock Grove

All prices include shipping and handling.

Contact the Friends of the Fells for wholesale prices.

Friends of the Middlesex Fells Board

Bryan Hamlin/Chair; Sandra Pascal/Vice Chair; Mike Ryan/Executive Director; Heidi Kelf/Secretary; Mike Oliver/Treasurer; Mayor Robert Dolan; Joyce Calabro, Bob Ghika, Walter Kittredge; Dana M. Jewell; Carol McKinley; Rich Sanford; and Bob Weggel



Bear Hill Nature & Historical Hike to Air

Last September the Friends of the Fells and the Medford Historical Society put together a very well received Nature and Historical Hike around the Bear Hill area of the Fells. Friends of the Fells Board Members provided an eye opening account of the various rich and diverse habitats and rare plants found in this part of the Fells, as well as an intriguing account of its rich historical significance and the Founders efforts to overcome adversity and establish what we now know as the Middlesex Fells Reservation.

The hike was filmed and edited by Malden Access Television and includes some rarely seen photos and footage of the Fells from decades past.

See the film on your local community cable TV station.

Check you local listings for updates.

MALDEN Verizon: Ch. 28, Comcast: Ch. 3

Mondays at 8:30PM | Fridays at 5:30PM | Saturdays at 9:30PM

WINCHESTER Verizon: Ch. 36, Comcast: Ch. 8

Saturdays at 5:00PM

MELROSE Verizon: Ch. 39, Comcast: Ch. 3

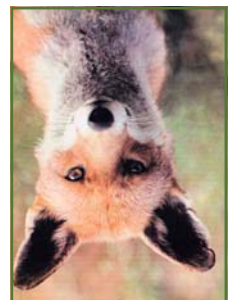
Tuesdays at 6:30PM | Thursdays at 11:00AM | Saturdays at 7:00PM

STONEHAM Verizon: Ch. 34, Comcast: Ch. 9, RCN: Ch. 3

Fridays at 6:30PM | Saturdays at 9:30AM

Return Service Requested

If you would like to receive Friends of Fells email updates on program changes, breaking news or alerts, please send your email address to friends@fells.org.



News of the Fells Fall 2012

Friends of the Middlesex Fells Reservation | 235 West Foster Street | Melrose, MA 02176
www.fells.org | 781-662-2340 | The Fells: forever the people's forest park

Non-Profit Org.
 US Postage
 PAID
 Boston, MA
 Permit No. 51778