



Friends of the Fells News

The Friends of the Middlesex Fells Reservation is dedicated to the protection and harmonious use of the Fells; promoting awareness, policies and programs to honor and preserve the ecological, historical and recreational resources of this urban forest reservation.

Issue 2, April 2016



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Spring has sprung!

What a great Spring we have lined up. With a full calendar of events, we would like to invite all of our members to join us for one or more of our many happenings in April and May. We are particularly excited about Hidden Treasures Week that is a region-wide celebration of the natural, cultural and historic "treasures" located within the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area including the Middlesex Fells Reservation. We have partnered with Freedom's Way to offer a week of fun and celebration in the Fells that will feature an array of nature themed hikes, a trail run, a bike ride, tours of Wright's Tower, and much more. We also have many opportunities for interested groups and volunteers to serve as volunteers including Park Serve Day on April 30th. Lastly, I would be remiss if we did not ask you well in advance to mark your calendars for the Friends of the Fells Annual Meeting on Wednesday, May 11th at 7pm (see calendar). See you on the trails!

Neil O. Anderson, Executive Director



Spring is the perfect time to join us for a Babes in the Woods Hike!

Babes in the Woods will meet every Wednesday in April and every Tuesday in May!





Photo by Anne Hamlin



Photo by Bryan Hamlin



Photo by Anne Hamlin

Found in the the Fells, April

Found in the Fells is a website of Dr. Bryan Hamlin, a resident botanist, Friends of the Fells Board member, and former President of the New England Botanical Club. His website is a great place to learn about the many wonderful things you can see and experience in the Fells on a month-by-month basis. Please visit foundinthefells.com to read more.

Spring is now in full development with new life showing everywhere. More change occurs in the Fells' woods during April than one might realize. At the beginning of the month there are buds on just about every woody plant, and by month's end several will be leafing out. Woody plants have of course a big advantage in that they don't have to start from scratch. In fact on warm days going back to February, the sap has been running, making the buds fatter, and now several species of tree will blossom this month. These are not the layman's "flowers" with petals, but the florescence of the Red Maple and Pussy Willow, and the dangling catkins of birch and alder are quite attractive, and all in bloom in the Fells in April with all they can do and learn.

At ground level, stream banks are where most greenery is to be found in early April as various water-loving plants get a head-start because of the relative warmth of the water compared with the still cold ground. Look for the bright green shoots of Indian Poke, *Veratrum viride*, with their beautiful ribbing, and the round leaves of Marsh Marigold.

Suddenly it seems we are aware of birds everywhere with both dawn and evening chorus. The cute Nuthatch is running up and down trees and swooping from one to another; and robins will strut along the trail in front of you.

The "quacks" from vernal pools can have you looking for ducks, but it will probably be the call of wood frogs early in the month, and by month's end many tadpoles to be

seen wriggling near the pools' edges. With the Salamanders congressing at the end of March, you can now see blobs of eggs lying on the brown leaves at the bottom of vernal pools.

And not only are amphibians about but reptiles as well, choosing any sunny day to warm up their blood and get going.

Then by mid-month in some parts of the Fells - certainly Virginia Wood and near Bellevue Pond - comes a true beauty, one of the early spring ephemerals, Bloodroot, so called because the root, if cut, bleeds red. This delicate white-petaled flower with deep yellow anthers stands wrapped in its "quilted" blanket of leaves on a frosty morning waiting for the sun to warm up before it opens. Another early beauty is Round-leaved Hepatica, sadly not very common in the Fells but it can be found on the south slope of Bear Hill. These flowers are termed ephemerals and indeed have a brief moment of glory whilst the sun reaches the woodland floor, and then are gone as quickly as they came.

Around the third or fourth week of April the woodland floor that has been a dull brown ever since the snows melted, almost miraculously develops large patches of bright green. Most of this is the result of the leaves of Mayflower pushing up and filling out. Others leaves developing now are wood anemone, wild columbine often in cracks on rocks, and on higher drier ground - Pussytoes with its small heads of furry white flowers.

The streams and swampy ground, which saw the first activities at the beginning of the month, towards the close are entering a second phase of development and color. The bright green leaves of skunk cabbage are now getting very large marking water courses clearly from a distance. Above them is the gangly shrub Spicebush with its bunches of tiny yellow flowers along the leafless branches catching the sun. And Marsh Marigold, whose leaves have been developing for some time, blooms. In royal England it is called Kingcup reminding us that it is not a marigold (daisy family) but rather a top-of-the-line buttercup, definitely looking regal in its boggy habitat.

By the last week of April large patches of Trout Lilies, with their brown spotted leaves, can be seen at Bellevue Pond and at the west end of the blue trail by Whitmore Brook. These delightful small lilies reflex their yellow petals on sunny days exposing dark red anthers.



Photo by Bryan Hamlin

Fells Environmental Impacts Appeal

Remains Under Review

Allowing the developers to build their project at its current scale would result in worsening traffic congestion and safety problems for the parkways.



For additional information or to learn how you can become involved or support the Friends of the Fells efforts, please contact the Friends Executive Director Neil O. Anderson at neil@friendsofthefells.org or by phone at 617-971-8991

Fells Environmental Impacts Appeal Remains Under Review

Article contributed by **Mike Ryan**

The appeal filed late last year in the lawsuit aimed at restoring Massachusetts Environmental Protection Agency's (MEPA) environmental review of impacts from the Langwood Commons development project at the former hospital site is expected to be heard in the Massachusetts Appeals Court. If the Appeals Court asks for argument on the briefs filed late last year, it is likely to be scheduled in the next few months.

The suit filed by Friends of the Fells, ten individual citizens, and the City of Medford seeks to counteract the attempt by the developers – with the concurrence of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) - to proceed with the development without completing an environmental impact review of the effects that 4,500 new daily traffic trips would have on historic parkways and the Fells Reservation.

The legal challenge asks the Court to rule that the developers are violating state environmental laws by attempting to evade MEPA review through improper segmentation of their development from the project's traffic impacts. The case also asks the Court to determine that DCR is violating MEPA by failing to ensure that the Fells' parkways are safe and protected from alterations that would adversely affect their scenic and historic characteristics.

Prior to 2009, DCR and the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs had rejected the developers' attempts to avoid completing environmental review by

insisting that under state law the developers are required to complete the MEPA process to identify a reduced scale for the project before commencing any construction.

In a June 2008 letter, DCR insisted that "mitigation measures, respecting the scenic that and historic integrity of the Middlesex Fells Parkway system, must be implemented to address public safety risks directly posed by development of the project." At that time, the development would have added 5,000 new daily traffic trips. In an Advisory Opinion issued July 3, 2008, the environmental affairs Secretary informed the developers that their project remained subject to MEPA jurisdiction even if they refused to seek a DCR permit to perform traffic mitigation work and verified that "DCR has a statutory obligation to ensure that its roads are 'reasonably safe and convenient for travelers."

In a letter to the Environmental Affairs Secretary dated June 4, 2009, the developers reported that traffic would be reduced from 5,000 to 4,500 daily trips.

DCR reversal

On September 18, 2013, DCR reversed its early position in a letter, citing the change from 5,000 to 4,500 daily trips, claiming "much has changed in the development of your separate project since 2008 and your project has been scaled back considerably since that time." DCR dismissed as "prior misapprehensions" its insistence prior to 2013 that "mitigation measures, respecting the scenic that and historic integrity of the Middlesex Fells Parkway system, must be implemented to address public safety risks directly posed by development of the project." Instead, based solely on the small decrease in projected traffic, DCR stated that

the developers' project could proceed without any parkway mitigation at all.

In December 2013, the Secretary's MEPA Director cited this DCR letter in a new Advisory Opinion that removed the project and its impacts from MEPA jurisdiction, thereby voiding the developers' MEPA obligation to present a reduced-scale project plan that could be built without bringing harm to the parkways.

"MEPA environmental review is at the heart of the lawsuit"

Parkways impacts after the project is built

Allowing the developers to build their project at its current scale would result in worsening traffic congestion and safety problems for the parkways. This would then force DCR either to demand that the developers obtain a permit to modify the parkways *after* the project is built, or to undertake extensive parkway changes using taxpayer funds. With traffic at such a large volume, there would be no way to prevent traffic alterations that would harm the scenic and character-defining features of the adjacent historic parkways.

This "segmentation" of the development project from its expected impacts in order to evade MEPA environmental review is at the heart of the lawsuit which aims to restore the Langwood Commons project to MEPA jurisdiction so as to minimize and prevent damage to the environment in the Middlesex Fells Reservation.

Volunteer Spotlight: Susan Tremonte

“Sharing my knowledge of the outdoors, and continuing to learn, and grow will be my lifelong mission.”

Contributed by: **Lindsay Beal**

Name: Susan Tremonte

Involved Since: 2015

Town: Salem, MA

Profession: I am the Recreation Specialist at SEEM Collaborative. SEEM’s recreational services assist youth in identifying and accessing community leisure and recreational opportunities. The Friends of the Middlesex Fells Reservation has been a valuable resource in programming, and encouraging our students to get outside and explore the beautiful natural world around them. Together, along with Mass DCR, we have created an iPhone Photography Program that encourages high school students to use their phones to capture natural photos, and memories they share in the woods together. The students’ responses to this program have been extremely positive, which makes future programming exciting to plan. For more information on the SEEM Collaborative, check out <http://seemcollaborative.org>



Susan is the Recreational Specialist at the SEEM Collaborative. She began working as a Friends of the Fells volunteer in 2015.

Are you interested in becoming a volunteer? Please email Lindsay at lindsay@yarsley.com

Susan tells us:

I love introducing new recreational opportunities to people of all ages. Volunteering with the Friends of the Fells has further opened up the world of recreation to me. Collaborating and sharing nature with like-minded people has brought a new level of happiness to my life, which I hope to share with others. My love, and respect for the outdoors was established at a very young age. My summers consisted of camping, fishing, puddle jumping, bike riding, swimming, and picnics in the woods. I spent a lot of time at an overnight camp called East Boston Camps. It was on Burges Pond where I learned that I was most happy in the woods. My dad taught me about knowing my surroundings, which has proven to be a useful skill to have in the woods, and in life in general. Navigating through the woods with my dog Luna, a trusty compass, a trail map, and the sun on my back is one of the most liberating experiences. Sharing my knowledge of the outdoors, and continuing to learn, and grow will be my lifelong mission.

Make a Difference, Volunteer!

Hike Leader – Lead groups from the public on a variety of experiences in the Fells. Some provide detailed information on the nature (flora, fauna, geology) or history of a specific area. Some lead “work” events to help maintain the trails. Others may lead a group simply for the sake of spending time with other people and enjoying time in nature. Events may target a specific demographic (families, artists, etc) or simply be of general interest to the public.

Assistant Hike Leader – Provide additional leadership and support to our regularly scheduled hikes. When a hike is oversubscribed, or attended by hikers of widely varying skills, the assistant hike leader may lead a subgroup on a separate shorter (or longer) route from the main group.

Event Development – Assist with the planning and coordination of events including periodic lectures on topics of interest to the Fells community, special hikes, and scavenger hunts for children, or other events. This process would include identifying topics, soliciting speakers /leaders, and overseeing event

logistics. The volunteer(s) should come with event planning experience and some experience with specifically relevant programs.

Trail Adopter – The Fells Trail Adopter Program provides the opportunity for volunteers to take responsibility for regular maintenance on a trail or trail segment within the Middlesex Fells Reservation. There are no formal requirements for the program other than a willingness to take on the responsibility. Basic training is provided for new adopters to ensure that they are capable and confident to perform their work safely and in a manner consistent with DCR policies and guidelines. Click to learn more about the Friends of the Fells Trail Adopter Program.

Newsletter/Calendar Production Specialist– Support our Executive Director in planning, soliciting, editing and laying out the content for our newsletter. Experience or training in editing would be especially helpful.

Website/Social Media Assistant – Update content on the Friends of the Fells website or

social media accounts. Support occasional projects to improve the Friends of the Fells online presence. Experience with social media marketing, web design, and/or WordPress would be especially helpful.

Friends of the Fells ‘Street Team’ – Friends of the Fells has a critical need to recruit volunteers who can staff our information/merchandise tables at a variety of community events during the year. If you can commit to supporting two weekend events during the year, for a two-hour shift at each, then please get involved! No specific training is required, just a great public personality and the desire to learn.

This is just a sampling of the opportunities we have available. To learn more about how you can contribute our most precious resource, your time, please visit our volunteer webpage:

Department of Recreation and Conservation Park Watch

Conserving the scenery, wild life and the natural and historic objects of the Fells Reservation while ensuring their enjoyment by the public is a challenge that invites active participation and engagement by visitors. There is a lot we can do to help preserve the beauty of the Fells!

Each and every month, thoughtful users of the Middlesex Fells Reservation report violations of park rules, overgrowth, downed trees, broken bridges, and other concerns to the Friends of the Fells. We then report your concerns to the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) who manages such reports and facilitates enforcement of violations as well as necessary maintenance and repairs. Often it will result in our working with DCR to organize a volunteer project around a reported issue.

While we appreciate the reports from our members and other users, we recommend using **Massachusetts Park Watch** system to make such reports.



Park Watch is a statewide program designed to protect public open space by promoting safe and environmentally sound use of local parkland.

About Massachusetts Park Watch

Park Watch is a statewide program designed to protect public open space by promoting safe and environmentally sound use of local parkland. Concerned volunteers work cooperatively with park rangers and police to recognize and report suspicious activity in and around park areas. Volunteers provide useful information to park managers and local law enforcement agencies by serving as additional "eyes and ears".

To report park concerns, please call:

1-866-PK-WATCH

(866-759-2824)

Spring Birding in the Fells



Contributed by **Laurie Adamson** FOF Member and Volunteer and originally published on the Friends of the Fells Blogsite June of 2015 (<http://www.friendsofthefells.org/allposts/>)

Photography by **Dennis Crouse**

My husband and I joined Pete Costello and six other birders on a cool Saturday morning in May to bird watch. Pete has been leading birding trips in the Greenwood Park area on Saturday mornings during spring migration.

We had a delightful morning watching and listening to birds. Since retiring I have become a warbler junkie. These birds are my favorite spring migrants. I call them 'little jewels'. They

are painted beautiful colors and have exquisite markings. You look up in the trees and see brilliant yellow: yellow rumps, orange and black throats, gold colored caps, streaks on the breast and chestnut sides. They are a feast for the eyes. But it doesn't stop there; these little guys also have beautiful songs. Beauty and song aren't the only things that attract me to watching these birds. They also put on a wonderful display hopping from branch to branch, flying out catching insects in flight. It is a wonderful dance to watch.

Pete was willing to take us to his "secret spot". No, he didn't ask us to put on blindfolds and we didn't take an oath not to tell anyone. He enjoyed sharing his spot with others who share his love for birdwatching. On this morning we were treated to several warblers: yellow warbler, black and white warbler, northern parula, yellow rump warbler, black throated green and a common yellow throat. Another treat was a pair of rose-breasted grosbeaks. We watched the female building a nest. We were serenaded by Baltimore orioles. Their brilliant orange is an eye catcher.

Get out your binoculars and enjoy the parade of gems in the Fells. If you don't have binoculars, don't fret. You will still be able to enjoy the birds. The orioles this time of year are plentiful and put on lively displays. You can't miss their brilliant orange. You can also watch the warblers doing their acrobatics in the trees. There are many great places to bird in the Fells: Long Pond, Wrights Pond, High Service Reservoirs, the shore of Spot Pond, and Virginia Woods.

Pete has a wonderful approach to birdwatching. He moves quietly through the woods, frequently stops to watch and listen, and will stay in one spot to watch and wait to see who visits. People new to birding to seasoned birders are welcomed on his trips.



APRIL

Friends of the Fells Events

Saturday, April 2nd: "First Saturday" Fells Running Club Trail Run

8:00 - 9:30 am

Trail Runners of all abilities are welcome to celebrate the coming of Spring a return to the Reservoir Trail (~5.9 miles, ~1 hour). For more information, contact Rich Sanford at [617-335-7310](tel:617-335-7310) or email rich@friendsofthefells.org
Meet at the Sheepfold Upper Parking Lot in Stoneham by 8:00 am

Saturday, April 2nd: Hike N Carry

1:00 - 3:00 pm

Join the Melrose Unitarian Church - Green Sanctuary Committee for a Hike N' Carry on April 2nd at 9:00 a.m. at Virginia Woods. Bags and gloves will be provided. All are welcome. For more information at Nancy Free at 781-420-3282.

Tuesday, April 5: Signs of spring at Virginia Wood

9:15 - 11:30 am

Spring has arrived. We will see if we can find any signs of spring on a walk around Virginia Wood. The walk will focus on plant ID as well as fun and interesting natural history. Meet in the driveway of #1 Woodland Rd at the intersection of Woodland Rd and Pond St in Stoneham. Steady rain cancels. For more information, please contact Boot Boutwell, 781-729-4712.

Sunday, April 10th: Animal Habitat Hike

10:00-11:30 am

Join Pete for a family-friendly walk to explore and discuss animal and bird habitats, nests and animal signs in the Fells. Walking will be easy to moderate. Bring water and binoculars. Meet at 10:00 am at the Flynn Rink parking area on Woodland Road. in Medford. Rain cancels. Email Pete at pbeararl@yahoo.com for more information.

Saturday April 16th: "Beginners" Trail Run in the Fells

9:00am-10:30am

Trail Runners of all abilities are welcome to join Shane for an introductory trail run in the Fells. Expect a 3-4 mile run at a manageable pace for beginners, over a mix of terrains in the Eastern portion of the Fells. Meet by 9:00am at the Flynn Rink Parking Lot (300 Elm Street) in Medford. Dress for the weather. Email shane.t.mcnally@gmail.com with any questions.

Saturday, April 23rd: Migrating Birds Hike,

7:00 – 8:30 am

Join Pete Costello of Zoo New England to look for warblers and other migrating bird species. Binoculars and bug spray are a must. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Meet at the Greenwood Park parking lot, Pond St., Stoneham across from the Stone Zoo. Rain cancels. Email Pete at pbeararl@yahoo.com for more information. 176 Pond St, Stoneham, MA 02180, USA

Tuesday, April 26: Birds moving north and other signs of spring

8:00 am – 10:00 am

Join Dana Jewell on an easy walk looking for resident and migrating birds as they move north towards their breeding grounds. Meet at the Greenwood Park parking lot, Pond Street in Stoneham (across from the Stone Zoo). Rain cancels.

Saturday, April 30th: Migrating Birds Hike,

7:00 – 8:30 am

Join Pete Costello of Zoo New England to look for warblers and other migrating bird species. Binoculars and bug spray are a must. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Meet at the Greenwood Park parking lot across from the Stone Zoo. Rain cancels. Email Pete at pbeararl@yahoo.com for more information. 176 Pond Street, Stoneham, MA 02180.



Photo by Gillian Badwan

MASSACHUSETTS



PARK SERVE DAY

PARK SERVE DAY

Saturday, April 30th: Serve the Fells for DCR Park Serve Day

9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Fells supporters of all ages are invited to join in a day of service at the Fells in conjunction with DCR Park Serve Day. Available projects may include trail cleanups, habitat restoration, trail maintenance hikes, or citizen science projects at various sites throughout the Fells Reservation. Meet at Flynn Rink (300 Elm Street, Medford, at corner of Woodland Road) between 9:00 and 11:00 am to register and arrange your work assignment. *Groups are welcome!* Please bring water, snacks, sunscreen and/or bug spray to suit your needs. Any required tools will be provided. Lightning cancels, otherwise please dress for the weather. Call Lindsay at 413-237-4747 or email lindsay@yarsley.com for more information.

MAY

Friends of the Fells Events

SAVE THE DATE: Wednesday, May 11th

Friends of the Middlesex Fells Reservation

ANNUAL MEETING

Meeting will be held 7:00 pm at Medford City Hall, City Council Chambers at 85 George P Hassett Drive, Medford, MA. More details and invitations will be sent in April.

Saturday, May 7th: 'First Saturday' Fells Running Club, 8:00am-9:30am

Let's go for a springtime run through the Eastern Fells. We'll cover ~5 miles including a substantial portion of the Rock Circuit Trail. The terrain is steep and rocky at times so don't plan on setting your personal best mile time on this one. Meet by 8:00am at the Flynn Rink Parking Lot at 300 Elm Street in Medford. Email shane.t.mcnally@gmail.com for more information.

Sunday, May 10th: Animal Habitat Hike

10:00-11:30 am
Join Pete for a family-friendly walk to explore and discuss animal and bird habitats, nests and animal signs in the Fells. Walking will be easy to moderate. Bring water and binoculars. Meet at 10:00 am at the Flynn Rink parking area at 300 Elm Street in Medford. Rain cancels. For more information email Pete at pbeararl@yahoo.com or call him at 617-593-5041.



Saturday, May 14 - Sunday, May 22

Hidden Treasures week is a region-wide celebration of the natural, cultural and historic "treasures" located within the **Freedom's Way National Heritage Area**, Hidden Treasures 2016 features a unique variety of regional treasures to explore during eight days of creative, community organized and presented activities offered free of charge. The Friends of the Middlesex Fells expects to add additional events and more information will be sent in late April. For additional information on Hidden Treasures Week including other regional events, please visit: discoverhiddentreasures.org

Saturday May 14th: Hidden Treasures Week' Trail Run on the Reservoir Trail 1 10:00am - 11:30 am

Trail Runners of all abilities are welcome to join Rich for a Spring trail run in the Fells. Enjoy scenic views of the Winchester Reservoirs as we follow the course of the splendid Reservoir Trail (~5.9 miles, ~1 hour). Meet by 10:00am at the Sheepfold Upper Parking Lot just off Routes 28 and 93 in Stoneham. Call Rich at 617-335-7310 or email rich@friendsofthefells.org for more information.

Saturday, May 14th: Migrating Birds

7:00 – 8:30 am
Join Pete Costello of Zoo New England to look for warblers and other migrating bird species. Binoculars and bug spray are a must. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Meet at the Greenwood Park parking lot, Pond St., Stoneham across from the Stone Zoo. Rain cancels. Email Pete at pbeararl@yahoo.com for more information.

Sunday, May 15th, 2016: Spring Bird Migration

10:00am- 12:30pm
Join Pete Costello of Zoo New England on a hike of the Rock Circuit Trail that will pass through both Medford and Malden. This hike will focus on the importance of green space and parks in cities and towns and how important they are for providing flyaway zones where birds can stop and feed before journeying further north. Binoculars are optional. Meet at the Flynn Rink at 300 Elm Street, Medford, MA. For more information email Pete at pbeararl@yahoo.com or call him at 617-593-5041.

Sunday, May 15th: Of Beavers and Burns 1:00-3:00 pm

The Fells is a vibrant active place of ecological change. Join Harvard botanist Walter Kittredge on a short hike in Lawrence Woods to two of the most intriguing places where the Fells forest is being made anew. Meet at the beginning of the Mustang Trail behind the Medford High School, 489 Winthrop St., Medford, MA. Family friendly. Walter Kittredge's cell phone: 978-270-0151.

Monday, May 16th: A Hike for Photography Enthusiasts 2:00 -4:00 pm

Explore Spot Pond and other Fells waterviews with Mike Ryan. Mike is the recently retired Executive Director of the Friends of the Fells and a photography enthusiast. Many of his photos of the Middlesex Fells are displayed at the Middlesex Fells Visitor Center in the Botume House. Mike Ryan's Cell Phone is 781-662-6889.



Photo by Bryan Hamlin

MAY

Friends of the Fells Events

Monday, May 16th: Long Pond Lady Slippers 9:15 - 11:30 am

Lots of Spring wildflowers are in full bloom at Long Pond and with any luck, the Lady Slippers will be among them. Join Boot Boutwell on a nature walk that will focus on wildflower identification as well as fun and interesting natural history. Meet at the Long Pond parking lot, South Border Road, Winchester. Steady rain cancels. For more information, please contact Boot Boutwell, 781-729-4712.

Tuesday, May 17th: May Flower Tour 10:00 - Noon

Wildflowers are in abundance in the Middlesex Fells. Join resident botanist and Friends of the Fells Board member and former President of the New England Botanical Club Bryan Hamlin for a modest hike to enjoy the many wildflowers, including Pink Lady Slipper orchids, in bloom at this time. Family friendly, all ages welcome. Meet opposite gate 8 on South Border Road in Medford. Bryan's cell: [781 854 2058](tel:7818542058).

Thursday, May 19th: Spring is Exploding 9:15 - 11:30am

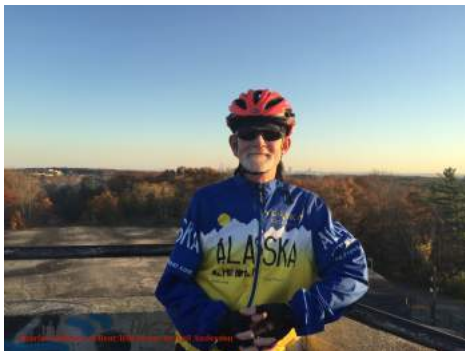
Spring is exploding at Bellevue Pond. Join Fells hike leader Boot Boutwell for a nature walk in search of late spring wildflowers and other cool plants. The walk will focus on plant ID as well as on fun and interesting natural history about the plants we see. Meet at the Bellevue Pond Parking Lot on South Border Road in Medford. Steady rain cancels. Family Friendly. All ages welcome! For more information, please contact Boot Boutwell, 781-729-4712.

Thursday, May 19th: Hike to Wrights Tower 3:00 - 5:30pm

Join Medford High School's Fells Mustangs Club, as we hike to Wright's Tower from out the back door of Medford High School. The hike through the Fells from the high school will bring us through the forests adjacent to South Border Road. Wright's Tower provides a commanding view of the Boston Skyline. One also gets a commanding view of the Middlesex Fells Reservation and this amazing natural treasure so close to Boston. The hike will be led by Charles Saulnier, Environmental Science Teacher and Nik Tower, History Teacher, the co-leaders of the group. This hike will be moderately difficult. Please dress for the weather. For more information, contact Charles Saulnier at sunny_n66d@yahoo.com or by phone at 781-646-4118.

Friday, May 20th: Novice Bike Tour 4:00 - 6:30pm

Would you be interested in touring some of the Middlesex Fells on a Mountain/All Terrain Bike? Neil Anderson, Friends of the Fells Executive Director and Charles Saulnier, from the Friends of the Fells Board of Directors will lead a bike excursion and discuss biking best practices (how to protect oneself, hikers, animals, and habitat) when riding on trails. We will stop at various points along the way to appreciate the scenic beauty of the Fells. This ride is for beginner bikers and will be at a slow pace though all levels of bikers are welcome. Helmets are required. Dress for the weather. Hard, steady rain cancels. For more information contact Neil by email at neil@friendsofthefells.org or by phone at 617-971-8991. Meet at the Flynn Rink at 300 Elm Street, Medford, MA.



Saturday, May 21st: Migrating Birds Hike, 7:00 - 8:30 am

Join Pete Costello of Zoo New England to look for warblers and other migrating bird species. Binoculars and bug spray are a must. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Meet at the Greenwood Park parking lot, Pond St., Stoneham across from the Stone Zoo. Rain cancels. Email Pete at pbearl@yahoo.com for more information. 176 Pond St, Stoneham, MA 02180, USA



Photo by Mike Ryan

Saturday, May 21st: Wright's Tower Tour 10:00am -12:00pm and 2:00 -4:00pm

Ever wondered about that stone structure visible from Route I-93 North? Hike the 15-minute incline to Wright's Tower for a spectacular view of Boston and our suburban neighbors! The tower will be open and staffed by a DCR Park Interpreter, who will be on hand to field questions. Come take in the view while learning about the park's founders, its cultural history, recreational opportunities, summer program calendar, and more! For more information please call Gillian at the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) at (774) 722-3838. Family Friendly.

Saturday, May 21st: Pink Lady Slippers and more

9:30 - 11:30 am

Join Bryan Hamlin in admiring Pink Lady-slipper orchids and other spring beauties. Meet at the Long Pond parking lot, gate 13, South Border Road in Winchester. Steady rain postpones till the same time on Sunday, May 24. Any questions, please call Bryan at 781-854-2058. Steady rain postpones until the same time on Sunday, May 22nd. For more information, call Bryan at [781 854 2058](tel:7818542058)



Photo by Bryan Hamlin

APRIL/MAY 2016

Babes in the Woods and Hike 'n Seek

*Babes in the Woods is an adult-paced hike designed for parents who carry their children and Hike 'n Seek is a nature-themed scavenger hunt for young hikers (toddler through school-aged) kids and their parents.. Babes in the Woods hikes will not be appropriate for young children who walk, and trails will not accommodate strollers. Please remember to wear appropriate shoes and clothing for the weather and do not forget to bring water! Contact Gillian Badwan at gillianbadwan@gmail.com or by phone at 774-722-3838 for more information. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Hike 'n Seek begins in May and with the exception of April vacation. Both Hike 'n Seek and Babes hikes will switch from Wednesday's to Tuesday's in May.*

APRIL 2016

Wednesday, April 6th

Babes in the Woods 10:00 - 11:30 am

Fallon Road; meet at Gate 21, 100 Fallon Road Stoneham (under the I-93 overpass)

Wednesday, April 13th

Babes in the Woods 10:00 - 11:30 am

Wyman Path; meet at Gate 16-Wyman Path. Nearest address is 83 Hillcrest Parkway, Winchester. On-street parking.

Wednesday, April 20th

Babes in the Woods 10:00 - 11:30 am

High Service Reservoir; meet at Flynn Rink, 300 Elm Street, Medford

Wednesday, April 27th

Babes in the Woods 10:00 - 11:30 am

Long Pond; meet at the Long Pond Parking Lot, 532 South Border Rd, Winchester.

April Vacation Hike 'n Seek!

Tuesday, April 19th

10:00-11:00am

Hike 'n Seek is a nature-themed scavenger hunt for young hikers (toddler through school-aged) kids and their parents. Meet at the Greenwood Park parking lot, Pond Street in Stoneham (across from the Stone Zoo)

Tuesday, May 10th

Hike n' Seek 10:00 – 10:45am

Babes in the Woods 11:00am-noon

Meet at the Greenwood Park parking lot, Pond Street in Stoneham (across from the Stone Zoo)

Tuesday, May 17th

Hike n' Seek 10:00 – 10:45am

Babes in the Woods 11:00am-noon

Both programs will meet at the Sheepfold parking area, 698 Fellsway West (Route 28) Stoneham.

Tuesday, May 24th

Hike n' Seek 10:00 – 10:45am

Babes in the Woods 11:00am-noon

Both programs will meet at the Bellevue Pond parking area, 68 South Border Road Medford

Tuesday, May 31st

Hike n' Seek 10:00 – 10:45am

Babes in the Woods 11:00am-noon

Both programs will meet at the Long Pond Parking Lot, 532 South Border Rd, Winchester.

MAY 2016

Tuesday, May 3rd

Hike n' Seek 10:00 – 10:45 am

Babes in the Woods 11:00 am -noon

Both programs will meet at the Botume House Visitor Center at 4 Woodland Road in Stoneham. Additional parking is available down the hill at the Spot Pond boating center parking lot, Pond Street in Stoneham (across from the Stone Zoo)

Middlesex Fells StoryWalk™

Saturday, April 16th – Sunday, April 24th

Our Big Home by Linda Glaser is our next StoryWalk™. What a great way to combine literature, exercise, and family fun! Our Big Home celebrates our Earth in a poem to commemorate Earth Day. It explores different environments on our Earth and talks about why they are so important. The StoryWalk™ is a collaboration of the **Friends of the Middlesex Fells Reservation, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation, Mass in Motion, Medford Family Network and the North Suburban Child and Family Resource Network.** The self-guided walk begins at Greenwood Park, in Stoneham (across from the Stone Zoo), and will continue along the Crystal Springs Trail in an easy, 1/3-mile loop. Foster your child's connection with nature as well as their literacy skills by participating in our StoryWalk™.



Nominate someone deserving for one of our Annual Awards

Every May at our Annual Meeting, we acknowledge the many citizens, public servants, businesses, and organizations whose contributions both small and large allow us to do the work we do. To that end, we give out special awards to both individuals and organizations whose work epitomizes the mission of the Friends.

Our awards include the Elizur Wright Award, Friends Service Award, Charles Eliot Award, Public Service Award, Fells Service Award, and the Wilson Flagg Award. We will accept nominations for these awards until April 22nd. If you would like to nominate a person or organization to be recognized, please email Neil at neil@friendsofthefells.org. Please include your name and contact information, the name of the nominee and a brief statement about why you believe they deserve consideration.



Friends of the Middlesex Fells Reservation, Inc.

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