

NATURALISTS' CORNER

Celebrating the First 50 Years of the Naturalists' Club

This April marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Naturalists' Club. During its 50 years, the Club has sustained the tradition of promoting natural history education. That tradition is deeply rooted in New England, which was a leader in the initial formation of scientific and natural history societies. Our group has played a pivotal role in increasing public knowledge and appreciation of nature.

Here are memories of some of the past field trips, speakers and activities of the Naturalists' Club. Some current members will remember these trips and speakers from years past! This is just a sample of hundreds of field trips and programs the Club has offered over the past 50 years. We gathered this assortment from our collection of newsletters dating back to 1969.

SOME OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

Annual Wildflower Sale (25 years)

Walks showcasing flowers, birds (e.g., hawk migration), trees, ferns, mushrooms, astronomy, caving, the microscopic world, photography, herb farms, wreathmaking, maple sugaring, etc.

Day hiking in Quabbin, Holyoke Range, and the Berkshires

Family camping in Vermont, Indian Hollow, and DAR State Forest

Canoeing and kayaking all major New England waterways, including the Connecticut River.

Waterfall hikes at Bash Bish, Sanderson, Chapel Brook, and Wadsworth Falls.

Summer solstice picnic and star parties.

Botany at the Springfield Cemetery

Scenic Berkshire Railroad trip with Russ Hawn and Lionel Foucher

Home Wine Making with Martha Sienkiewicz

Wilderness Adventures for Teens: Canoe School and backpacking in the White Mountains with Charlie Spencer

SOME OF OUR TRIPS

Plum Island day trip to Parker River National Wildlife Refuge – Dave Gallup, Robin Demetrius, Colette Potter and Delores Gentile.

Yearly bus trip to New York City, American Museum of Natural History – Lionel Foucher

Bus trips to Boston museums and aquariums – Lionel Foucher

Weekend Cape Cod trip to Brownies cabins and naturalist-guided tour – Jim Morin

Weekend Nantucket Island Interpretive Bike Tour.

SOME OF OUR MULTI-DAY TRIPS

The Southwest – Jack Megas

Smoky Mountains – Tom and Nancy Condon

Virgin Islands Cinnamon Bay “camping” – Katherine and Brian Charbonneau

Nova Scotia; Wilderness Camping – Charlie Spencer

Costa Rica – Sonya Vickers

Galapagos – Sonya Vickers

Yellowstone – Sonya Vickers

Cruising the Maine Coast in Camden Maine – Bryan Clarke and Colette Potter

Bus Trip to Papillon Park and Garden in the Woods for butterflies and wildflowers

“The Hudson River in Art and Literature” – Ted Roupes

Cross Country Skiing in Vermont

Annual weekend trip to Stump Sprouts – Colette Potter, Brian Charbonneau, Dietrich and Julie Schlobohm

Day trip to Herkimer County New York; Herkimer Diamonds – Richard Sanderson and Jack Megas

Weekend bus trip to Longwood Gardens – Jim and Nancy Morin

Noble View Weekend – Al McMullen and Jack Megas

Viewing Halley's Comet in 1986, Everglades National Park – Jack Megas, Linda Leed and Dave Gallup

Smith College Greenhouse – Northampton

SOME OF THE EVENTS

March 1980, Whale of a Day Celebration with 3,000 people at Springfield Civic Center. 40 environmental groups and speakers, parade down State Street for save the right whale our state mammal. License plates were made available.

Mt. Tom Controversy – clear cutting at Mt. Tom – Jack Megas and Richard Sanderson attended meeting of the Hampden County Commission at Springfield Hall of Justice. Sierra Club and Springfield County Forrester were also in attendance. The Naturalists' Club received support from the City Forester, Explorers Club, Appalachian Mountain Club and the general public. They encouraged the membership to write to state representatives to stop the cutting and save the pristine wilderness. Through their efforts they thwarted the plan to clear-cut Mt. Tom and saved it from future cuttings. Presentation of The Naturalists' Club Environmentalist of the Year award and dinner.

All One Planet Celebration for all life-forms on Earth, at Springfield Science Museum – Bob Tynan

Quabbin Eagle Watch, Enfield Lookout, Quabbin Reservoir RV and Camping Show booth, Big E grounds.

An Evening with Naturalists, a December get-together at Sonya Vickers'

Volunteer Appreciation party at Jim and Nancy Morin's home
40th Anniversary of the Naturalists' Club Celebration at Noble View.

SOME OF THE FEATURED SPEAKERS

450 monthly meetings over 50 years with exceptional speakers including:

Michael Guillemette “Native American Plants, Ethics, Relationship to Land”

Tom Ricardi – “Birds of Prey”

Robert Leverett – “Old Growth Forests”

Thomas Tynning – “Okefenokee – Wildlife Biology”

John McNeely, naturalist and filmmaker, *The Raven*

Richard Little, “Geology of the Pioneer Valley”

Les Campbell – “Quabbin – A Meeting of the Waters”

Michael Tougias – “Hidden Treasures of Massachusetts”

Juan Carlos-Jimenez – “Marine Mammals from Newfoundland to the Caribbean”

Ray Pawley – “The Zoo's Role in Protecting Endangered Species”

Amazing Naturalists' Club Members and Board of Directors!!

THE CONJUNCTION

A Naturalists' Club program “Astronomy in Four Seasons” by Richard Sanderson and Jack Megas gave birth to the Conjunction, a gathering of astronomers at Northfield Mountain now in its 37th year!!

~ *Dave Gallup and Jack Megas*