FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST NEWSLETTER

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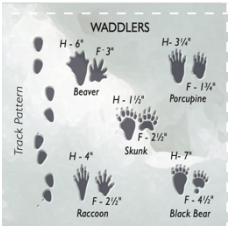
Joys of Nature Zoom Programs!

Mammals of New England
New Zealand
Australia – Above and Below

Keeping with social distancing, Joy Marzolf of ***Joys of Nature*** fascinated us on zoom with three programs in April and May. Here are some interesting take aways that Joy shared with us about NE mammals and faraway New Zealand and Australia.

Mammals of New England – Joy shared her webcam pics of animals sneaking into her backyard at night and educated us on the tracks that they leave in the snow. Skunks and racoons are "waddlers", foxes and coyotes are "perfect walkers", while river otters are "bounders." Although skunks are generally not welcome visitors, they are natural pest controllers eating insects and the larvae of ground wasps. Squirrels, rabbits, and beavers need to constantly chew to keep their teeth trimmed as they grow continually.



New Zealand – New Zealand is known for the site of the Hobbit and Lord of the Rings movies. It is home to Kiwi birds in the forest and whales, dolphins, sea lions, penguins, and fur seals in the ocean. Fur seals have 350 hairs per square inch, hence their name. It hosts the smallest penguins in the world, known as *fairy* penguins. It has steep waterfalls and Jacques Cousteau named *Whangarei* one of the top 10 places in the world for diving. Joy explored caves filled with glow-worms, fossils of whale bones and cavern formations.

Fairy Penguin

Australia – Above and Below – If you've seen the move Point Break, you've seen the Australian coast noted for its popular surfing spot. Australia has botanical gardens with huge fruit bats hanging in the trees, a temperate rain forest with many birds of the parrot family such as crimson rosellas and king parrots and lace monitor lizards which scamper up the trees to escape danger. The Australian outback hosts kangaroos, koalas, and wombats which people typically associate with Australia. Although wildfires are not unusual, the fires in 2019 devastated 27 million acres caused by years of drought and the warming climate. It is estimated that these fires claimed the lives of approximately 1 billion animals. Of course, the great barrier reef is a big tourist draw and you may find *Nemo*, the clown fish among the green sea turtles and lionfish among the reef residents.

The President's Message

I have good news to share with you, and it's appropriate that I share this during National Preservation Month. The renovation of the CCC headquarters building is starting. The first activity you may see will be bringing water from the well near the cottage to the HQ building. Future improvements will include rest rooms, universal access, new wiring, and making the building ready for public use. As we've mentioned in the past, some of the renovation work will be done by the students of Blackstone Valley Technical School.

I also wanted to let members know that the DCR Special Commission is holding a public listening session, hosted by the UMass Donahue Institute, on Monday, May 25, from 4-6 p.m. (pre-registration is required.) The purpose of the session is to accept comments for the Commission to use in developing recommendations to improve the management, operations, and asset condition of the natural, cultural and recreational resources held by DCR. They are also accepting email comments at ma-dcr-commission@donahue.umass.edu through June 8 at 5 p.m.

The Special Commission, which was created by 2019 legislation, consists of officials from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, legislature, other state agencies, and professional organizations (including two members from parks friends groups). The Massachusetts Conservation Voters reports that the Commission's recommendations will frame DCR's priorities for the next decade.

The Donahue Institute conducts research to support the Commission's work. In addition to the public listening session it is conducting sessions with various stakeholders to discuss ways DCR can improve transparency, accountability, and project planning and execution and ways DCR can leverage resources to support its work and mission. FUSF was invited to send a representative to a session on Tuesday, May 18, that I will be attending.

More information about the public listening session can be found by entering May 25, 2021 Public Listening Session of the DCR Special Commission into your browser's search field. More information about the Special Commission, including a link to the enabling legislation, can be found by entering Department of Conservation and Recreation Special Commission in your browser's search field.

FUSF Board of Directors

Bill Taylor, President
Joyce Sandvik, Vice President
Mary McManus, Secretary
Chris Scott, Treasurer
Agnita Knott, Membership
Members-at-Large

- Alisa Bernat
- Suzanne Nicholas

Reminder! Renew Your FUSF Membership

Please take a minute to renew your membership in the Friends of Upton State Forest. Not a member? Please consider joining. Your membership helps us provide this newsletter, sponsor nature related programs and contribute to the ongoing work of maintaining our Upton State Forest trail system.

A membership form is attached to this newsletter or go to our website and you can now pay via PayPal.

Thank You – your patronage is very much appreciated!

Can you Help?

Our new web site is coming along as we update content thanks to Mike Penko, Bill Taylor, Suzanne Nicholas, Ellen Arnold and Joyce Sandvik. Mike has been our "web master" and we need someone with Wordpress experience to serve as a backup to Mike to post content. If you can help, please send a message to our email at friendsofuptonstateforest@gmail.com

Did You Know?

USF has new picnic benches at the headquarters. Pack a lunch and enjoy a picnic after your hike!

Bridge Gets a Facelift

The bridge between Southboro and Westboro road was resurfaced with non-slip material thanks to Suzanne Nicholas, Mary McManus, Bill Taylor, Joyce Sandvik and BSTRA president Becky Kalagher. Thanks to Kimball Sand for donating the pea stone making the bridge much safer for all.

Before

After

Dog Poop Bags at USF and the Practice of Visualization to Manifest Desired Outcomes

By

Mary McManus

Imagine you are on your way to the state park, any state park with Rover your best friend, visualizing a scenic, serene yet exhilarating hike with pup in the fresh air. You park, grab the leash, your poop containment system (PCS, will explain later) and Rover and off you go! All is well until you see your first discarded poop bag on the trail. You can't miss it, it's pink. Ok, maybe the person who left it will grab it on the way back. You continue and see another one. This one is camo green. Same thought, it will be picked up on the way back. By the time your hike is over you have seen several poop bags left by the side of the trail and what was supposed to be a stress free walk in the woods becomes consumed by the fact that these bags will sit on the ground and melt into the environment. Never mind that the next hiker and the hiker after that will have to visualize these blemishes on what otherwise should be pristine landscape. When you get back to the trailhead there are more left by the entrance, an ugly rainbow of color. And the antique Iron Ranger at the entrance which in its hey day was used to collect camping fees and donations left by the public has been turned into a makeshift garbage can.

I have thought long and hard about why people leave their dog poop bags behind. Its logical to me if you own a dog you own its poop. Therefore, one is responsible for it. I have been walking my beloved pet in state parks for years. It makes my day to watch his enjoyment the moment we enter the woods. But I also understand that trail etiquette means not leaving his business behind. That's where the PCS comes in. A PCS is my made up name for a poop containment system. The over the shoulder sling bag was purchased online at DuluthTrader.com. but something similar can be found at any store that sells bags. It was not advertised specifically for poop containment. That was my creativeness. The bag is made of canvas and is approximately 7"x 8" and weighs next to nothing. It has a flap and inside contains my roll of poop bags. The outside has a pocket perfectly suitable for a cell phone and set of car keys. I can also clip on a can of bear spray. Yes, bear and coyote are known to roam the woods with us. Once out of the car the sling bag goes over my shoulder and is forgotten until…….. you bet, Rover has decided it's time to relieve himself. I pick up his excrement, tie it nicely and in the PCS it goes. If you feel you need to double bag then go for it. Once inside the PCS there is NO odor and you are free to continue your hike without the poop bag swinging in your hand for the rest of the trip. It is contained in the PCS which rides behind you and forgotten. Out of sight, out of mind.

What to do with the poop bag once back to the car you ask? Take it home! The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency supports throwing poop bags in the trash or flushing the contents down the toilet and discarding the bag. Do not throw the bag in a porta potty. The plastic bag is damaging to the equipment used to clean the potty. If we all follow this procedure when taking Rover out for his next excursion your visualization of a scenic, serene yet exhilarating hike with pup will never become a visual disappointment.

Last, but certainly not least, a big thank you goes out to the majority of hikers that do pick up after their pet and properly discard its waste.

Calendar of Events

September
9/11 – BSTRA Wild West Ride – participant parking only at the CCC headquarters 8 AM-3 PM

October
10/31 – BSTRA Pumpkin Ride – participant parking only at the CCC headquarters 8 AM-3 PM

Be sure to frequent our **Facebook Page** for great nature pics, local info on our environment and announcements of future events.

Board of Directors meetings – 3rd Monday of each month @ 7:00 PM
in the 1st floor conference room at the Upton Town Hall. (via Zoom call during Covid-19)

Watch for future programs and events as our calendar for 2021 unfolds!

FUSF Merchandise for Sale

FUSF merchandise is temporarily unavailable for sale on our web site. We are in the process of enabling PayPal for ease of purchase. This will be available soon. Thanks for your continued patience as we update our new web site.

Available at amazon

Do you shop Amazon? You can help support FUSF by using AmazonSmile Charity Lists and selecting FUSF when you order. A percentage of your order will go to FUSF. THANK YOU!

02/17/21

FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST
PO BOX 258
UPTON, MA 01568-0258

NEW MEMBERSHIP ----- MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL------ (check one) (Please Print Clearly.) (Information is for Friends of Upton State Forest only.)

Date_____

Name:_____

(For family membership please put two names)

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____State_____Zip code_____

Telephone: _____E-mail _____

Would you consider being a member of one of our committees? Please circle your choices.

Auditing	Fund Raising	Newsletter	Refreshments	Trails Committee
Education	Historic Resources	Program	Resource Inventory	
Events	Membership	Publicity	Telephone Committee	

What is your interest? Circle all that apply. (Please use the reverse for comments, or to tell us, if you wish, of other organizations, you belong to that support these interests.)

Bird Watching	Horseback Riding	Orienteering	Snowmobiling
Cross Country Skiing	Hunting	Open Space Preservation	Trail Running
Hiking	Letterboxing/Geocaching	Photography/Art	Wildlife Watching
Historical	Mountain Biking	Snow Shoeing	Other (what?)

Membership Categories: (Circle one)

Individual ----------$25.00
Senior 65+----------$12.50
Student full time with current student id----------$12.50
Family of 2 adults & children (under age 18) ---------- $37.50

Additional Donation Amount: General Fund or Special Fund?
Anonymous? Yes--- No--- Memorial or Honorarium?
Name of person being recognized?

(* Please note: There is a $25.00 charge for returned checks.)

Below this line is for office use only:
Payment: Cash Check # Amount paid: Category: Year Paid:
Cards issued by: Newsletter address entered by: