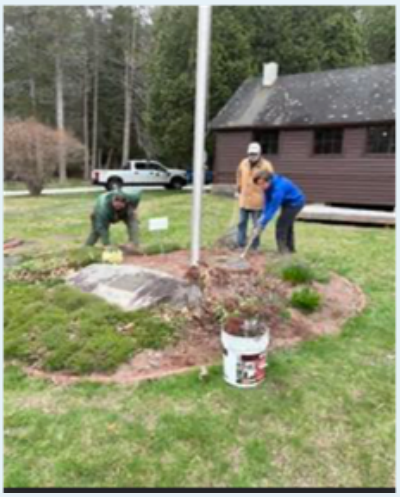
Spring 2026

newsletter

Park Serve Day at USF



On April 26, we commemorated Park Serve Day at Upton State Forest with the incredible support of 26 volunteers from Friends of Upton State Forest, Bay State Trail Riders Association, DCR, and our community of friends and family.

Volunteer Activities Included:

- Raking leaves
- Planting flowers
- Pruning trees

Two crews from the Bay State Trail Riders focused on clearing the Lackey Link Trail, the loop connecting headquarters to Middle Trail, Swamp Trail, and parts of Middle Trail.

A special thanks to Ellen and Russ Arnold who donated the pizza and desserts which we all enjoyed for lunch. We are grateful to everyone who volunteered!

HTTP://WWW.FRIENDSOFUPTONSTATEFOREST.ORG

friends@friendsofuptonstateforest.org

Like us on Facebook!

President's Message

I want to give another heartfelt thanks to the Bay State Trail Riders Association (BSTRA) for all they do for Upton State Forest. Their most recent work at the forest was participating in April's Park Serve Day. Eleven BSTRA members formed two crews. One crew made improvements to the trails leading into the forest from the trailhead parking lot. The other crew completed the Lackey Link Trail (reached from the old Lackey Road where it ends in Westborough) to where it intersects with the Looper and then also cleared a portion of the Looper. I wasn't familiar with these trails, so I went out to explore them and just came back from a very long walk over them. It was a beautiful day for walk (the ticks seemed to enjoy the weather as well). I am thankful to BSTRA for not only the work done on Upton State Forest's trails, but also for introducing me to new Upton State Forest trails. We enjoyed pizza and desserts for lunch, and if BSTRA members are there, they can count on Hawaiian Pizza being among the selections.

Bill

Turtle Crossing

ALERT: Turtles on a road trip! 🐢🚙 We've heard about shelled travelers getting hit on Southboro and Westboro Roads. Here's how you can help:

- Keep your eyes peeled for turtles, especially near watery hangouts.
- Slow down and let them waddle across safely.
- Skip the swerve—stop if you can do it safely, then continue with caution.

We've asked the town to put up turtle-crossing signs to keep our slowpoke friends safe!

Snapping turtle
pic by Maureen Byrne

Welcome New Members

- George Ross family, Holliston
- Ann Suazo, Milford

Not a Member?

You can join on-line on our website or use the membership form at the end of this newsletter.

Thanks for Your Donation$

- Linda Chuss & Michael Alfano
- Ellen & Russ Arnold
- Gloria Duhaime

Soldiers of the Revolution and Upton State Forest

contributed by Ellen Arnold

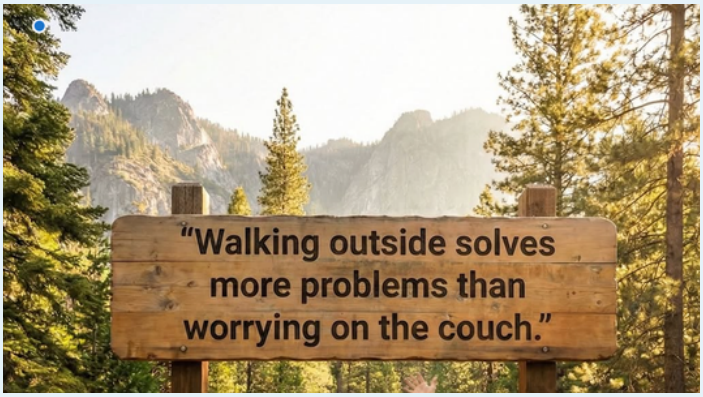
When you hike in New England the landscape often surprises you with hidden history. At Upton State Forest there are many layers of history from pre-contact through to our CCC Camp buildings including cellar holes of families whose daily lives contributed to building our nation. Some of you may have discovered one of those places near the Rabbit Run Trail. It is an impressive site with a house cellar hole, a nearby well, a large barn cellar hole and remains of another structure of unknown use at this time. The first time I saw the barn in the early 1970's there were granite pillars that supported the barn structure still standing.

The earliest recorded deed at the Worcester Registry of Deeds showed John and Lois Childs transferring two tracts of land to Wilson Rawson the second and his second wife, Phila (Adams) in 1826. Part of the deed description refers to the road to the Hopkinton Spring. The trail within Upton State Forest called Hopkinton Spring Trail actually follows the county line more or less and is most likely where the spring was located. Part of the trail is bounded by stone walls which may indicate it was part of the road. Local lore says that the spring was used by early families from Upton, Westborough, and Hopkinton. Researching this family turned into a project that will take far more time than the deadline for this newsletter! There were four generations named Wilson Rawson in Upton and the question of which ones owned the cellar holes at the bottom of Ridge Rd is yet to be determined. Since this series of articles is about Soldiers of the Revolution the information I included is for Wilson Jr who served Upton and Massachusetts many times. In 1754, he was chosen as a member of Upton's first School Committee and in 1757, was listed as a member of the Training Band. In January of 1777 he was chosen to serve on the local Committee of Observation that kept track of the men who owned firearms and were eligible to serve in the Army.

Wilson served as a Soldier of the Revolution several times including at Roxbury in April of 1775 supplying his own weapon as expected. Later in life he successfully qualified for a pension for this service. In 1778, he was a member of the Committee to review the proposed Constitution for the State of Massachusetts Bay. He served twice as a Representative to the Massachusetts General Court. When he passed in 1841 in Northbridge his death record described him as a yeoman (farmer), but another record showed him to be a "joyner" (carpenter).

Was this the one of the Wilsons who lived at that cellar hole? Hopefully by the next newsletter I will have the Wilsons' sorted out! More to come!

cellar hole



2026 Calendar of Events

June 07 - DCR hike at USF 2 - 4 PM

July 12 – BSTRA Spirit of America ride at USF 8 AM – 2 PM– event parking only at the CCC

September 26 - Upton Heritage Day

October 25 – BSTRA Pumpkin ride at USF 8 AM – 2 PM – event parking only at the CCC

Watch for future programs and events as our calendar for 2026 unfolds!

FUSF Merchandise

Hoodies and T-shirts available.
Send an email to the FUSF mailbox friends@friendsofuptonstateforest.org with your order.

- Hoodies $35 for members, $40 for non-members.
- T-shirts $13 for members, $15 for non-members.

- Be sure to frequent our FacebookPage 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 via Zoom.

FUSF Board of Directors

- President - Bill Taylor
- Vice President - Joyce Sandvik
- Secretary - open
- Treasurer - Chris Scott
- Membership - Agnita Knott
- Members at large:
  - Suzanne Nicholas
  - Open

For DCR hike information go to https://blackstoneheritagecorridor.org/hikes/

To join our mailing list, send an email request to friends@friendsofuptonstateforest.org

Be kind to birds, bees and other wildlife
Use natural pesticde control

5/17/26 (last updated)

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
- Education
- Historic Resources Program
- Trails Committee
- Events Membership
- Publicity

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
- Hiking
- Open Space Preservation
- Trail Running
- 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? (circle one)
Name of person being recognized? _____

*If no place is indicated for donations, it will go to the General Fund.
*Please note: There is a $25.00 charge for returned checks.)

Below this line is for office use only:

_____

Payment: Cash Check # PayPal Amount paid: Category:
Year Paid:
Cards issued by: