



CREATING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR SPOTTED TURTLES

by Victoria Brown, Naturalist

Last fall, I was presenting a turtle program at a local library. I introduced the first turtle and talked about its adaptations and ecological role. But when I brought out the second animal—also a turtle—I heard a child exclaim, “UGH! ANOTHER turtle?!” I laughed and said, “Yes, another turtle...but not just any turtle. This is a spotted turtle, a threatened species you may never get to see in the wild.”

That moment captures why I focus on turtles during my educational programs at the Science Center. Turtles aren’t just fascinating—they’re also bioindicators, species that reflect the health of their ecosystems. When turtle populations decline, it’s often a sign that their entire habitat is in trouble.

Spotted turtles, *Clemmys guttata*, are easy to admire. About 3 to 5 inches long, they have dark shells, heads, and limbs dotted with bright yellow spots. They inhabit shallow wetlands: marshes, swamps, slow-moving streams, and vernal pools with dense aquatic vegetation. These habitats are essential for feeding, mating, and nesting.

But these critical wetland environments are vanishing fast. Habitat loss is the number one threat to spotted turtles, and it’s happening in several ways:

- **Destruction:** wetland draining or development for roads and housing
- **Degradation:** pollution changes water quality or plant life
- **Fragmentation:** roads or urban sprawl divide wetland areas, making it harder for turtles to find mates, nest, or migrate

In the summer, spotted turtles nest in open meadows, fields, and even human-altered landscapes. Females lay 2 to 8 eggs between June and July, often traveling long distances to reach suitable nesting sites. But these journeys are increasingly dangerous. Roads and developed land now cut through many turtle routes, leading to vehicle collisions and fewer successful nests.

In the winter, spotted turtles brumate, entering a hibernation-like state, beneath the roots of trees or shrubs in wetlands and vernal pools. As these seasonal pools dry up or are filled in, turtles lose their safe overwintering sites, leaving them more vulnerable to the cold and predators.

Spotted turtles are omnivores, feeding on aquatic plants, insects, worms, and even small amphibians like frogs. As both predators and prey, they play an important role in maintaining healthy wetland food webs. When their numbers drop, there are ripple effects throughout the ecosystem.

And it’s not just about turtles. When we lose wetlands, we also lose clean water, flood control, and biodiversity. Protecting spotted turtles means protecting an entire web of life, from dragonflies to otters—and it means preserving habitats that benefit people too.



Spotted Turtle, *Clemmys guttata*

The challenges facing spotted turtles may seem large, but conservation begins with small, meaningful actions:

- **Keep turtles wild:** Never take them from their natural habitat.
- **Help them cross roads:** If it’s safe, move turtles in the direction they’re headed.
- **Don’t release pet turtles into the wild:** Doing so can spread disease and harm native populations.
- **Secure trash and food:** This reduces predators like raccoons that prey on turtle eggs.
- **Limit recreational disturbance:** Stay on trails and avoid disturbing wetland vegetation.
- **Support or volunteer with conservation organizations:** Many local groups are doing vital work.
- **Share what you learn:** Talk to people about turtle conservation.
- **Consider careers in wildlife conservation:** You could help shape the future for these species.

Conservation isn’t just about saving animals; it’s about restoring balance. If we can protect spotted turtles, we’re also safeguarding the wetlands that sustain them and countless other species. Imagine a future where spotted turtles are no longer at risk, where an environmental educator can proudly tell a room full of kids, “These turtles used to be threatened, but we brought them back.”

To learn more about spotted turtles and how you can help, check out your local Fish and Game/Wildlife website.

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FORGING TRAILS:

A TRIBUTE BY IAIN MACLEOD



Since the Science Center's inception back in 1966, the Webster family has been integral to our growth and success. It was Frank G. Webster who helped found the Science Center and fund the purchase of the acres where we stand today. His children and their families and their children and families and now the fourth, fifth and sixth generation of the extended Webster clan continues to cherish and support us in so many ways.

As a kick off for our 60th anniversary (in 2026), we recently launched our Animal Habitat Initiative funded in part by a \$250,000 capital grant from the Edwin S. Webster Foundation (Frank's uncle), \$115,000 from Tim and Audrey Fisher (grandson and granddaughter-in-law of Frank) through the Audrey Hillman Fisher Foundation, \$30,000 from the Justin Brooks Fisher Foundation (great grandson of Frank), and additional generous pledges of support from other Webster family members.

These funds will allow us to undertake a long list of renovations to the "back of house" animal care facilities for several of our exhibits as well as to the front of house visitor experience. The initiative has already allowed us to transform the Mink exhibit in Water Matters to a spectacular new Turtle habitat, as well as the renovations required to house our new Fisher at the Ecotone Mammal exhibit. More than fifty different projects and purchases will be made possible at almost every one of our animal exhibits – all with the overarching goal of continuously improving the facilities and wellbeing of our animals.

I am forever grateful to the extended Webster family members for their vision and commitment. Without their support, the Science Center would not be what it is today.



New Turtle habitat in Water Matters Pavilion

Iain MacLeod, Executive Director
iain.macleod@nhnature.org
603-968-7194 x 123

SQUAM LAKES NATURAL SCIENCE CENTER

PO Box 173, 23 Science Center Road

Holderness, NH 03245

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Squam Lakes Natural Science Center is a non-profit educational institution incorporated in 1966 as a charitable organization under statutes of the State of New Hampshire with its principal place of business in Holderness. Its mission is to advance understanding of ecology by exploring New Hampshire's natural world.

Tracks & Trails is a regular publication of Squam Lakes Natural Science Center distributed to members and contributors. Comments are welcomed at info@nhnature.org.

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OPENING A WINDOW TO THE NATURAL WORLD

by Rachel Saliba, Development Director

SUMMER EVENTS!



2025 Family Picnic

"Friends of the Forest"

July 12, 5-8 pm
rain or shine

Please join us for an evening of family fun featuring:

- Live Music
- Lawn Games
- BHS Kids Corner
- Live Animal Presentations
- Photo Ops and more!

Catering by:

- Gusto Italian Cafe
- MrSippy BBQ
- Peaks Food Truck
- Sub Zero Nitrogen Ice Cream

Purchase Early Bird tickets before June 22nd
Get yours at nhnature.org
Interested in sponsoring the Family Picnic?
Contact Nicole Verspyck at nicole.verspyck@nhnature.org

SEE PAGE 6 FOR MORE DETAILS ABOUT THE FAMILY PICNIC!

RHÉAUME CEDAR CANOE RAFFLE!



A generous donor provided this gorgeous 16' Rhéaume Cedar Canoe. With a selling price of over \$6,000, you can win it for only \$50! Only 125 tickets will be sold. Get yours at the Family Picnic!

KIRKWOOD GARDEN PARTY

An adult-only cocktail reception

Thursday, August 14, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Immediately following the 2025 Annual Meeting

The Garden Party is back! This year, we're asking guests to reserve a free ticket in advance, and if you feel inspired, consider making a voluntary donation to support the Science Center. By giving what feels right to you, you're helping us make a bigger impact – while still enjoying our garden party together. **See page 7 for more details about the Kirkwood Garden Party!**

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our first Spring 2025 Appeal! Your generosity ensures that our beloved Red Foxes, and all animals in our care, continue to inspire joy, connection, and wonder in everyone who visits Squam Lakes Natural Science Center.

For nearly 60 years, we have been a place where families and friends discover the beauty and excitement of New England's wildlife. As a nonprofit 501(c)(3), we depend on your charitable support and our members to fulfill our mission. Thank you for making a lasting difference and for being such an important part of our community. Squam Lakes Natural Science Center tax ID: 02-0271824.



**SCAN TO
DONATE
TODAY!**

YOU CAN SUPPORT THE SCIENCE CENTER...

SPONSOR AN EVENT

Learn more about this meaningful way to positively impact the community and the Science Center by becoming an event sponsor. Contact Nicole Verspyck at nicole.verspyck@nhnature.org to learn about ways of sponsoring an event.

JOIN THE LEGACY SOCIETY

If the Science Center is part of your family's heritage and you'd like to ensure it is available for generations to come, please consider becoming a member of the Naturalist's Legacy Society by including Squam Lakes Natural Science Center in your estate planning. For more information email rachel.saliba@nhnature.org



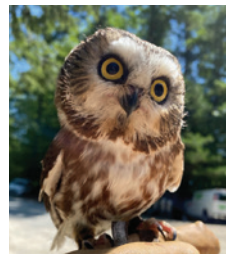
SPONSOR A MARSH BOARDWALK PLAQUE



Become a part of the history of the Science Center and the new Marsh Boardwalk by sponsoring a custom engraved message or name on a brass plaque. See full details at nhnature.org/boardwalk.

SPONSOR A SPECIES

Take your support of the Science Center animals to the next level! Sponsor your favorite animal and see your name listed on our website and along the live animal exhibit trail! The animals at Squam Lakes Natural Science Center serve as ambassadors for their species, here for the purpose of teaching about New Hampshire's natural world. You can help provide food, health care, and housing for your favorite feathered or furry species - through Sponsor A Species.



https://nhnature.org/support/sponsor_species.php

NATURALIST'S CORNER: AWE AND WONDER

by Eric D'Aleo, Senior Naturalist

In 1974, Ed Gibson, an astronaut on the Skylab space station, reflected on the view he saw outside his window – “*You see how diminutive your life and concerns are compared to other things in the universeIt allows you to have inner peace.*” Gibson had experienced the “overview effect,” a profound sense of awe and connection to the planet and its inhabitants when viewed from space.

Awe is described as a feeling of being in the presence of something vast that goes beyond your current understanding of the world. Jane Goodall describes it as “being amazed at things outside of yourself.” Awe is about our relation to the mysteries of life, but is it always about these larger-than-life moments?

Each of us can experience awe in our daily lives, whether in art, music, being in nature, or through the behavior of others, where we find the extraordinary in the ordinary. Perhaps by witnessing the generosity of a stranger, smelling a flower, looking at the vibrant hues of a sunset, or hearing music we are transported to a different time or place. When awe happens we are instantly aware of it.

Our jaw drops and we may smile as our eyebrows and upper eyelids raise. We may feel chills down our neck and spine, and we may express unbidden laughs, shrieks, oohs and aahhs. We become aware of the things that unite us and try to make sense of this with others. The total solar eclipse of April 2024 in New Hampshire was one such memorable example for many people who experienced it.

Awe is often difficult to describe, yet people find ways to express it through writing, art, music and dance. In combination the impact can be magnified. “2001: A Space Odyssey” evokes a feeling that allows audience members to open their minds and wonder, to consider their connections to others, and find meaning or explore the world around them. Just listen to the music from the movie and you can feel the chills – that’s awe.

Humans have a tendency to wonder about and seek connections with the natural world. Follow a child on a walk outside and she will find wonder and awe in every direction she travels. It seems that the physical and emotional benefits of undertaking an “awe walk” are well worth the effort.

When we experience awe and wonder in nature we feel better, concentrate better, and handle stress with more resilience. Our bodies react with reduced inflammation, improved cardiovascular function, reduced anxiety and depression. These benefits can occur regardless of our age.

It also impacts our brain, quieting down our ego as awe heightens awareness of being part of a larger community. This allows us to consider the gaps in our own knowledge and the perspectives and evidence from other sources more openly, seeing the communality in others as opposed to their differences.

We understand how our lives are shaped by forces outside of ourselves, including family, mentors, health, and opportunities.

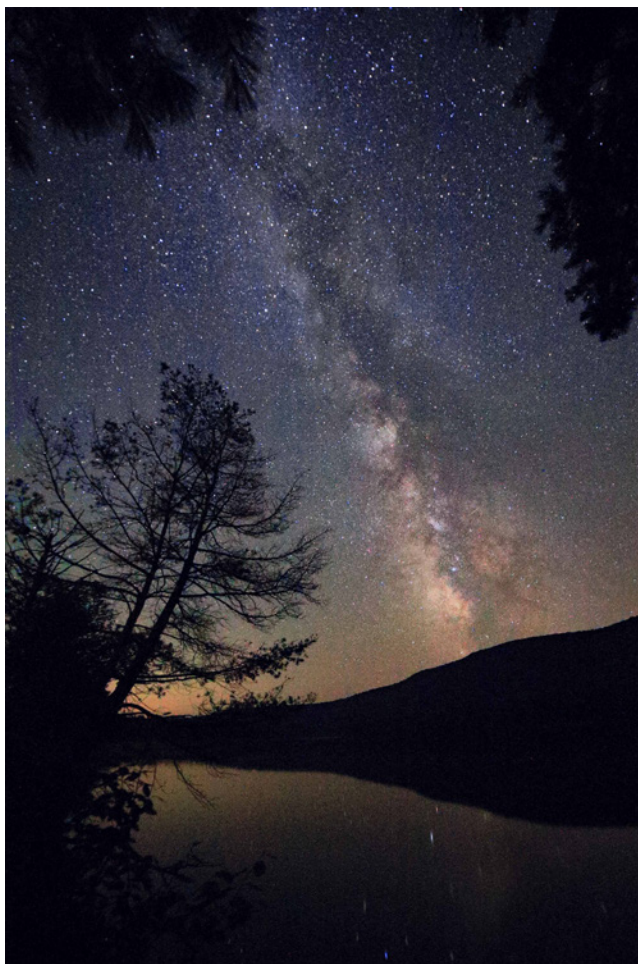


Photo credit: Eric D'Aleo

Awe makes us more compassionate and inspires us to give our time, abilities and energy to others. It allows us to recognize that we are just a tiny speck in a huge place, providing motivation to find purpose and possibility in our interactions with each other and connection with the world in which we live.

So how does one cultivate a sense of awe and carry it forward into adulthood? An essay by Rachel Carson describes what we might call today, “unplugging.” **Take a walk, slow down, look up at the sky and clouds, rather than at a cell phone. Listen to the wind and the insects around you, rather than the latest podcast. Use your senses to open your mind to the wonders of the natural world. Look at the sky for migrating birds. Follow the change of forest types up the slope of a mountain. Watch the growth of a seedling and its relationship to the earth. Ask questions. Take these walks in new locations, near water, under the night sky, at sunrise or sunset.**

Awe is more likely to be felt as we practice it and we realize that... “*those who dwell ... among the beauties and mysteries of the earth are never alone or weary of life.*” – Rachel Carson

For more information read the book by Dacher Keltner – “Awe – The New Science of Everyday Wonder and How It Can Transform Your Life”

FROM THE ARCHIVES



How times have changed!

The Science Center was first housed in the “Holderness Inn” on Route 3. Taken in the early 1970s, this photo shows a school group visit.



KIRKWOOD GARDENS

by Emma Erler, Lead Horticulturalist and Exhibits Assistant



COMMON PLANT Q & A

Q: Milkweed is taking over my perennial garden. How can I save some for the monarch butterflies but keep it from spreading?

A: Common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) is a perennial plant that can be found in a wide range of habitats including roadsides, fields, and gardens. It reproduces primarily from seed, but once it is established it can spread from its rhizomatous root system.

All parts of the plant contain white, latexy sap that is filled with toxic cardiac glycosides. These poisonous compounds keep most predators from eating milkweed. One of the few exceptions is the monarch butterfly, which has evolved to be able to eat and accumulate the toxin in its body as a defense mechanism. Monarchs are so closely associated with milkweed that they cannot complete their lifecycles without milkweed as a food source.

Common milkweed is often too aggressive and weedy to be widely appropriate for beds and borders. It is much better suited to unmaintained edges of fields, meadows or thickets. If you already have common milkweed in the garden, you can prevent further spread by removing immature seed pods. Since milkweed is a perennial, it will emerge again in the same spot next summer, but its spread will be more limited. Individual plants can also be repeatedly hand-pulled or treated with an herbicide.

If you decide to remove all of the common milkweed from your garden, consider replacing it with other less aggressive native milkweed species. Monarch butterflies will also utilize swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*), butterflyweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), and whorled milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*), all of which tend to grow in clumps and are good choices for perennial beds. However, for the ultimate butterfly habitat, leave some common milkweed on the outskirts!



Plant Spotlight and Kirkwood Gardens are sponsored by Belknap Landscape Company, Inc. belknaplandscape.com

PLANT SPOTLIGHT

Butterflyweed, *Asclepias tuberosa*

Culture: An easy to grow perennial in average, dry to medium, well-drained soils in full sun. Drought tolerant. New growth emerges in late spring. Plays are long-lived but can be very slow to establish. Does not transplant well due to its taproot. Hardy in Zone 3.

Bloom: Upright clusters of bright yellow-orange flowers. Long bloom period from late June through August.

Height: 12-24 inches

Butterflyweed is an attractive plant for perennial gardens, meadows, prairies, and native plant areas. Native to Eastern North America, though not as far north as New Hampshire historically, it grows well throughout the granite state. Butterflyweed flowers are a wonderful nectar source for hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies, and leaves are a food source for monarch butterfly caterpillars.

Kirkwood location: Lower garden on the driveway side.



Mexican Sunflower, *Tithonia rotundifolia* 'Torch'

Culture: This warm weather annual is easily grown in average (even poor), dry to medium, well-drained soils in full sun. Avoid rich soils. Deadhead to encourage continuous bloom.

Bloom: June to September. Beautiful 3" intense orange blooms with orange-yellow centers appear over a long bloom period.

Height: 4 to 6 feet, so best for the back of the border

Mexican sunflowers are native to Mexico and Central America. Plants thrive in the summer heat. May be direct-seeded in the garden after the last frost date, or started indoors 6-8 weeks before the last frost for an earlier bloom. Good cut flower. Very attractive to butterflies and hummingbirds!

Kirkwood location: Lower garden on the driveway side.



ANIMAL CARE: TAKING CARE OF TURTLES

Brian Church, Animal Care Associate

The Science Center is home to several species of turtles, so it is important to know their differences for proper care. Some are great swimmers, others not so much. Some prefer to hide underwater for a while; some prefer to stay dry and bask. Some might want a worm to eat; some might want a piece of leafy greens.

Turtle homes consist of multiple converging habitats such as marshes, woods, rivers, and more. Additionally, they are omnivores, feeding on both meat and plant matter. This means that turtles kind of like to have it all, so we work hard to provide that for them! We give them tanks and pools with ramps and waterfalls, wood chips and leaf litter to crawl on,

plants and bark to hide under, UV light and heat bulbs to control their body temperature, and a variety of plants and proteins to snack on.

Creating an ideal environment requires attention daily. We monitor the temperature and humidity values of each enclosure to make sure the turtles aren't too hot or cold, too dry or wet. For bigger tanks, we use charcoal filters to keep the water clean and flowing. Even if they haven't made a mess yet, we'll still change out their water and substrate routinely to help the space feel fresh and clean. To keep track of all the upkeep, diet requirements, and more, we record it all so we don't forget anything!

SUMMER 2025 PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Programs have limited capacities and advanced registration is required.
Full details and tickets are available on the Calendar of Events at nhnature.org.

JUNE

LECTURE - STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE'S BIRDS

by Dr. Pam Hunt, PhD, Senior Biologist of Avian Conservation at New Hampshire Audubon

In the last 50 years, scientists estimate that North America has lost roughly 3 billion birds, meaning that there are only three quarters as many birds around as there used to be. New Hampshire Audubon has been tracking bird populations for almost as long, and in our "State of the Birds" report we present a summary of how birds are doing here in the Granite State. Almost 300 species occur regularly here, and this report outlines general population trends, major threats facing birds and their habitats, and some of the conservation strategies that might help them recover. The bad news is that birds are declining here as well. The good news is that there are things we can do about it.

Cost: Free, but space is limited. Advance registration is required.

**JUNE 10
TUESDAY**
6:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Adults

KIRKWOOD GARDENS: GUIDED EXPLORATION AND Q&A

Enjoy a personalized tour of Kirkwood Gardens with Lead Horticulturist, Emma Erler. Discover the garden's rich history, see what's blooming, and get answers to all your gardening questions. This guided tour is perfect for garden enthusiasts and curious beginners alike.

Youth must be accompanied by a registered adult.

Cost: \$12 members/\$15 nonmembers

**JUNE 11
WEDNESDAY**
10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Teens & Adults

SPECIAL EVENT: MEMBER'S ONLY SUMMER SOLSTICE AT THE SCIENCE CENTER

Join us for our first members-only "Summer Solstice at the Science Center." Enjoy the trails all to yourselves after-hours and talk with volunteer docents who share their passion and knowledge of our beloved animals.

Tickets are not required, but please arrive by 6 p.m. to enter the trail.

**JUNE 18
WEDNESDAY**
5:00 to 7:30 p.m.
Members Only

STORYWALK™ KICK OFF RECEPTION - MR. MCGINTY'S MONARCHS BY LINDA VANDER HEYDEN

Stroll along the channel as you read Mr. McGinty's Monarchs by Linda Vander Heyden posted one page at a time along the trail. Follow along to see if Mr. McGinty can come up with a plan to save the monarch caterpillars after their milkweed has been mowed down! Children can participate in a craft and enjoy a snack connected to the story during the Kick Off Reception. StoryWalk™ surrounds the Holderness Town Gazebo behind the Post Office at Curry Place. Presented in partnership with Curry Place, Holderness Library, Squam Lakes Association, and Holderness Recreation Department.

StoryWalk™ is open daily from June 27-September 1

Sponsored by: **Meredith Village Savings Bank**

Cost: No charge and no reservations required.



**JUNE 27
FRIDAY**
10 to 11:30 a.m.
All Ages
At Curry Place,
Holderness

JULY

LECTURE - UNVEILING THE SECRETS OF A FOREST-NESTING RAPTOR: THE BROAD-WINGED HAWK

by Rebecca McCabe, Research Biologist and Laurie Goodrich, Director of Conservation Science with Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association

Join Hawk Mountain research biologists Drs. Laurie Goodrich and Rebecca McCabe to learn about one of New Hampshire's most iconic raptor species: the Broad-winged Hawk. Laurie and Rebecca will provide an update on Hawk Mountain's long-term collaborative research on the full annual cycle of this forest raptor including migration data from Broad-winged Hawks tagged with GPS transmitters in the Granite State.

Cost: Free, but space is limited. Advance registration is required.

**JULY 7
MONDAY**
7:00 to 8:00 p.m.
Adults

SPECIAL EVENT: FAMILY PICNIC: "FRIENDS OF THE FOREST"

Bring your family and join us to celebrate "Friends of the Forest" and enjoy Naturalists-led animal programs, the Kid's Corner sponsored by **Blue Heron School**, crafts table sponsored by **Service Credit Union**, lawn games sponsored by "Survival of the Fit", music by the **Audrey Drake Band**, and, of course, mouthwatering food from **Gusto Italian Cafe**, **Mr. Sippy**, **Peaks Food Trucks**, and **Sub-Zero Nitrogen Ice Cream**.

Tickets sell out quickly! Purchase your tickets today at nhnature.org/picnic or call us at 603-968-7194.

**JULY 12
SATURDAY**
5:00 to 8:00 p.m.
All Ages

LECTURE - FINDING FISHERS IN THE GRANITE STATE: TRACKING THE POPULATION AND SURVIVAL OF NEW HAMPSHIRE'S ELUSIVE MESOCARNIVORE

by Remington Moll, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Wildlife Ecology and Management, UNH

Fishers (sometimes mistakenly called "fisher cats") are native to New Hampshire, but their populations appear to have declined in recent years. Join Dr. Moll as he shares the natural history and ecology of this fascinating and sometimes misunderstood species. He will also provide an update of what biologists are learning through ongoing research on fisher population dynamics and survival across New Hampshire.

Cost: Free, but space is limited. Advance registration is required.

**JULY 30
WEDNESDAY**
6:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Adults

JULY CONT.

**JULY 2, 16 & 30
WEDNESDAYS**

KIRKWOOD GARDENS: GUIDED EXPLORATION AND Q&A

See June Description

AUGUST

SPECIAL EVENT: BIRTHDAY BASH FOR THE ANIMALS

**AUGUST 6
WEDNESDAY**

10:00 a.m. to
4:00 p.m.
All Ages

You are invited to this one-of-a-kind birthday party to celebrate our animals with unique enrichment gifts. Learn how animal care staff provide a rich and stimulating environment for our animal ambassadors through daily enrichment activities. Watch the animals open their birthday presents at special **Up Close to Animals** presentations at 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m., and at different animal exhibits throughout the day. Docents will be on hand with touchable objects and to answer questions.

Cost: Included with trail admission. Last admission at 3:30 p.m.

**AUGUST 12
TUESDAY**

6:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Adults

LECTURE - WHAT'S WILD: A HALF-CENTURY OF WISDOM FROM THE WOODS AND RIVERS OF NEW ENGLAND

by Eric Orff

Veteran wildlife biologist Eric Orff, who has lived a life on the wild side in New Hampshire, will join us to share stories from his book *What's Wild: A Half-Century of Wisdom from the Woods and Rivers of New England*. From saving thousands of mother bats from certain death by poison, to riding a ten-point whitetail buck, when the "tranquilized" deer lurched to his feet with Eric astride as it thundered downhill at warp speed in the dark of the night. Holding on for DEER life had a whole other meaning! This will be a night of stories not to be missed!

Written during his five-decade career as a wildlife biologist in New Hampshire, the wonderful tales of fish and wildlife featured in Eric's book represent a lifetime filled with adventures in the Wild. Eric will be signing copies of his book after the presentation.

Cost: Free, but space is limited. Advance registration is required.

**AUGUST 14
THURSDAY**

5:00 to 7:30 p.m.
Adults

ANNUAL MEETING

Business includes electing officers and trustees, honoring retiring trustees, recognizing employee service, and the presentation of the Horizon Award. Election slate and biographies of nominees will be posted after July 1 to nhnature.org/programs/annual_meeting.php

SPECIAL EVENT: KIRKWOOD GARDEN PARTY

An adult-only cocktail reception immediately following the Annual Meeting. The Garden Party is back – and this year, we're inviting you to join us in a new way! This year, we're asking guests to reserve a free ticket in advance, and if you feel inspired, consider making a voluntary donation to support Squam Lakes Natural Science Center. By giving what feels right to you, you're helping us make a bigger impact – while still enjoying our garden party together.

Cost: No charge to attend but reservations are required for both events.

**AUGUST 13
AUGUST 27
WEDNESDAYS**

KIRKWOOD GARDENS: GUIDED EXPLORATION AND Q&A

See June Description

LOOKING AHEAD

RAPTOR MIGRATION CELEBRATION

**SEPTEMBER 20
SATURDAY**

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
All Ages

Fall is a season of transition and many animals are on the move to wintering grounds. Join us for migratory raptor presentations at Up Close to Animals in the amphitheater. Learn about where our raptor species go each winter, how long it takes them to get there, and why they return. Do not miss special **Raptor Encounters by the Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS)** throughout the day, featuring a flight demonstration with their raptor ambassadors.

Cost: Included with trail admission. Last admission at 3:30 p.m.

**OCTOBER 4
SATURDAY**

DONOR AND MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY

OWL-O-WEEN

**OCTOBER 25
SATURDAY**

Join us for Owl-O-Ween to celebrate all things owl! Meet live owls at Up Close to Animals presentations throughout the day. See the animals along the live animal exhibit trail enjoying a variety of pumpkin treats. Come in your favorite costume. Children will receive a bag of Halloween treats at the end of their visit to take home.

Sponsored by **Service Credit Union**

Cost: Included with trail admission. Last admission at 3:30 p.m.

**OCTOBER 26
SUNDAY**

NEW HAMPSHIRE DAY

New Hampshire residents may visit the live animal exhibit trail for \$8 admission thanks to our generous sponsors: **Dead River Company, New Hampshire Electric Co-op Foundation, Meredith Landing Real Estate and Franklin Savings Bank**. Non-New Hampshire residents may purchase regular-priced admission tickets. New Hampshire residents must provide proof of residency upon admission. Enjoy Up Close to Animals presentations at the Amphitheater at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.



Timed advance purchase tickets are required.



FROM THE HERON'S NEST



Blue Heron School is wrapping up another wonderful school year! Children are enjoying all things spring, and have been very busy making and preparing special gifts for their caregivers. We started plants from seed for our garden and have planted the seedlings in the ground. We explored the pond with the Naturalists for our last trip of the year and have been enjoying longer days outside balancing on logs and playing in the puddles. We are incubating chicken eggs and so excited to meet the new chicks.

Kindergarten children are preparing for the end of the year by wrapping up big projects and working hard on new, more complicated ones. Ms. Ashley is out after having a healthy baby boy at the end of April and many parents have been volunteering for a couple of hours each day. Our kindergarten celebration is scheduled for June 12th and we will have nine children graduating and moving on. BHS summer camp is set to start the following Monday and will run for five weeks. Children will explore the grounds of the Science Center and harvest food from our garden. We are looking forward to sunnier days and even more time outside!



Blue Heron School is a nature-based Montessori school for children ages three to six. For information please visit nhnature.org/programs or contact Blue Heron School Co-Directors Jordan Fitzgerald and Jordy Gianforte at 603-968-7036 or blueheron@nhnature.org.

KIDS' ACTIVITY

Make a Pond Scope - Featured in *50 Nature Activities for Kids* by Dave Erler

Being able to see into the underwater world of a pond can be a wonderful experience. Surface glare, waves and shadows can make it difficult to see down into the water, but building a simple pond scope with common household materials can provide a view to whole different world.



To build a pond scope you will need the following:

- 32 oz. plastic yogurt container and lid
- Medium size metal can
- Plastic wrap
- Duct tape
- Rubber bands
- Can opener
- Scissors



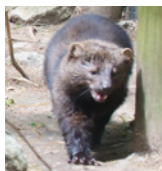
1. Cut a large circle in the plastic container lid with scissors leaving about 1/4" along the top edge.
2. Remove the bottom of the metal can with a can opener.
3. Using the metal can trace a circle on the plastic container bottom.
4. Cut the circle out of the plastic container bottom.
5. Duct tape the can to the plastic container bottom.
6. Stretch the plastic wrap over the top of the plastic container and snap the lid to seal the plastic wrap.
7. Rubber bands can be used to hold the excess plastic wrap to the plastic container sides.



Now you are ready to explore a nearby pond or other water body!

ON THE TRAIL

WELCOME NEW ANIMALS!



We welcomed three animals to the trail this spring! Two Red Foxes joined our blind Red Fox, providing companionship. Also blind, a playful arboreal weasel, aka Fisher, stays active for much of the day. Visit them all at the Ecotone Mammal Exhibit!



RIVER OTTER FEEDING

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays in June, July, and August at 11:30 a.m. at the River Otter Exhibit

Sponsored by: **TESco**

UP CLOSE TO ANIMALS

Daily in July and August at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., and 3 p.m. at the Amphitheater

Sponsored by: **Rockyworld Deephaven Camps and Squam Boat Livery**

TURTLE TALKS

Tuesdays in July and August at 10 a.m. on the Bluestone Terrace of the Webster Education Building

STORYWALK™

Open daily June 27 - September 1 at the Holderness Town Gazebo at Curry Place. Presented in partnership with Curry Place, Holderness Library, Squam Lakes Association, and Holderness Recreation Department. Sponsored by: **Meredith Village Savings Bank**

NATURE TOURS WITH IAIN

NEW MEXICO – LAND OF ENCHANTMENT

November 13-23, 2025

HEBRIDEAN ADVENTURE

May 15-28 AND June 12-25, 2026

NORTHERN ISLES ADVENTURE – SHETLAND AND ORKNEY

May 28-June 10, 2027

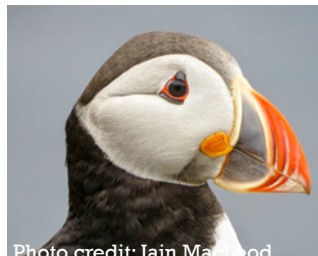


Photo credit: Iain MacLeod

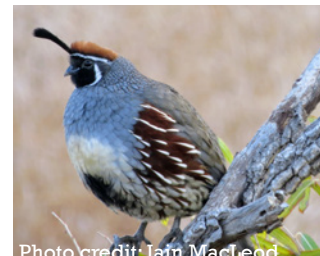


Photo credit: Iain MacLeod

Atlantic Puffin and Gambel's Quail

Space is available in these sought-after excursions led by Executive Director, Iain MacLeod. Iain creates and leads these small-group tours to Scotland and New Mexico that explore the ecology and natural and cultural history of the regions. The group size (maximum of 11 guests in Scotland and 8 in New Mexico), and unhurried pace fosters new friendships, a relaxed atmosphere, and flexibility in the schedule. Learn more and download the detailed itineraries at https://nhnature.org/programs/nature_tours.php.

2025 LAKE CRUISE SCHEDULES

Bald Eagle Adventure

May 20 - June 10: Tuesdays 3 p.m.

A naturalist discusses the recovery of Bald Eagles and focuses on viewing nests on Squam Lake.

Discover Squam Cruise

May 17 - June 30: Daily at 1 p.m.

July 1 - August 23: Daily at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and Tue., Wed., Thur., Sat., & Sun. at 3 p.m.

August 24 - October 13: Daily at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., and 3 p.m.

Enjoy Squam Lake and learn about the natural history, wildlife, culture, and people of the lake.

Loon Cruise

June 23 - August 22: Mondays and Fridays at 3 p.m.

July 11: "Loon Day," all cruises are Loon Cruises!

A Loon Preservation Committee biologist discusses loon conservation, biology, and monitoring. The cruise route changes to maximize loon observations.



Church Island Shuttle

9:30 a.m. Departure for 10:30 a.m. service

Sundays: June 29 - August 31

The Science Center provides limited boat transportation to Chocorua "Church" Island for Sunday services during the season. Reservations are required.

Church Island Shuttle Rate: \$17 per person (all ages)

Squam Lake Charters:

Host your own unique gathering on Squam Lake with a private cruise customized to fit your occasion, or transport wedding guests to Church Island. Our four canopied pontoon boats and experienced tour guides are ready to help with your special outing. Contact Erick Amero at 603-968-7194 x110 or erick.amero@nhnature.org for reservations. \$375 per boat/per hour

All cruises require reservations at nhnature.org

Rates for Public Cruises (Bald Eagle Adventure, Loon Cruise, Discover Squam)

| | MEMBER | NON-MEMBER |
|--------|--------|------------|
| ADULT | \$30 | \$34 |
| SENIOR | \$28 | \$32 |
| CHILD | \$26 | \$30 |

VOLUNTEER UPDATES

BY CAROL RAYMOND, VOLUNTEER MANAGER

Volunteers are amazing! They donate their time and talents to support the Science Center's mission and share their joy and excitement with staff and visitors. In June, the Science Center offers training sessions for **adults and teens as docents and junior docent First Guides**. Docents interpret animal exhibits and exchange knowledge and stories with visitors on and off-site.

THE 5-DAY ANNUAL DOCENT AND FIRST GUIDES TRAINING PROGRAM DATES:

- June 19 from 3 to 7 p.m.
- June 21 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- June 24 from 3 to 7 p.m.
- June 26 from 3 to 7 p.m.
- June 28 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Adult docents are 18 and older, and teen First Guides are 14 through 17. The one-time fee of \$50 helps to cover the cost of training materials. Scholarships are available.

For more information and a Volunteer Application form, visit the Volunteer Page on our website, nhnature.org, or contact Volunteer Manager, Carol Raymond, at carol.raymond@nhnature.org, 603-968-7194 x 122. *No experience is necessary!*



VOLUNTEERS SAVE THE DATE! AUGUST 28

Parson's Volunteer Recognition Dinner at Camp Deerwood

Sponsored by **Meredith Village Savings Bank**. Check your email for further information.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

MEMBERSHIP BRINGS YOU NEARER TO NATURE!

Don't miss out! Renew your membership today to take advantage of special members only events and discounts.

Make memories at the Science Center this year by purchasing a membership to bring your family and friends 'Nearer to Nature' all season long! Your membership allows for free daily admission to the live animal exhibit trail and all hiking trails May 1 through November 1, as well as bonus member benefits at local attractions and 150 ANCA locations throughout the country. You'll also receive discounts for additional trail tickets, events, programs and lake cruises. **For a full list of benefits please visit nhnature.org/membership**



Scan to renew or purchase your membership today!

2025 BONUS MEMBER BENEFITS



As a Science Center member, you receive discounted admission all year at participating ANCA organizations like VINS in Quechee, VT and Seacoast Science Center in Rye, NH.

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|
|  APRIL |  MAY |  JUNE |  JULY | |
|  AUGUST |  SEPTEMBER |  OCTOBER |  NOVEMBER |  DECEMBER |

Reciprocal admission is generally good for up to two adults and two youth per visit. Be sure to take your membership card with you when you go. Check with specific organizations for hours, directions, and information.

TRAIL'S END BY SARAH BROWN, BOARD CHAIR



As I write this note, I am still basking in the terrific news that was shared with the Board just a few days ago: on May 1, Opening Day at the Science Center, we had a recording-breaking 821 visitors! In my mind that is not only noteworthy in and of itself, but it shows that our focus on New Hampshire wildlife and environment is of deep and enduring interest to our broad community. I have never doubted that

for one minute, but it is also exciting to see such numbers. Our visitors were treated to beautifully maintained trails and animal enclosures, high quality educational materials and signage – and our ever more popular gift shop which I note now includes stuffed bears of all sizes!

I am also moved again by the beauty of this area. My husband and I were able to come up earlier this summer than we usually do and being here in the peace and beauty of the Lakes Region is truly balm for the soul (especially given that the rest of the year we live in Washington, DC... enough said). The owls welcomed us as did the loons, and we love the quiet that precedes the busy summer.

I am also savoring my last few months serving on the Science Center Board. The past nine years have flown by – a blur of progress, new friends, superb leadership and staff, deeper understanding of the Science Center itself, and increasing appreciation for this unique area. When I have a bit more free time, I hope to return to walking the trail with the little Saw-whet Owl (my favorite) or perhaps a turtle or two. Doing so is not only fun in and of itself, but it leads to many interesting conversations with visitors of all ages and backgrounds. Hope to see you on the trail, too!

Trail's End is written by Sarah Brown, Chair of Squam Lakes Natural Science Center's Board of Trustees. You may contact her at sarahbrown1948@gmail.com.

STAFF UPDATES



Pictured:

Ashley, Kelley, Alex, Nicole, Sloane and Marylena

Early this year we said goodbye to Senior Naturalist, Jeremy Philips (started in 2007) and Communications Director, Amanda Gillen (started in 2011). Jeremy was a mainstay of our education department and taught thousands of children and adults; sharing his passion for the natural world in creative and enlightening ways. Amanda started in Marketing and Visitor Services and progressed to Development and Communications Director while her three boys attended Blue Heron School. We thank both Jeremy and Amanda for their outstanding contributions and wish both of them well in their new adventures.

Please help us welcome new staff, including Assistant Naturalists: Kelley Lavoie and Alexandra Bradley, Animal Care Associate: Ashley Porter, Administrative Coordinator: Sloane French, Development Coordinator: Nicole Verspyck, Connected Learning Coordinator: Heidi Emmons, and Marketing and Communications Director: Marylena Sevigny.

TURTLE QUIZ

1. Why are turtles considered bioindicators?

- A. They are at the top of the food chain
- B. They can survive in any environment
- C. Their presence reflects the health of their ecosystem
- D. They migrate long distances every year

2. How do spotted turtles spend the winter months?

- A. They migrate to warmer regions
- B. They dig nests in open fields
- C. They brumate under roots in wetlands or vernal pools
- D. They hibernate in tree cavities

3. Which of the following is NOT a recommended action to help spotted turtles?

- A. Moving a turtle across the road in the direction it's heading
- B. Releasing pet turtles into local wetlands
- C. Keeping food and trash secured to reduce predators
- D. Learning and sharing information about turtle conservation

4. What is the biggest threat to spotted turtles today?

- A. Predators like raccoons and foxes
- B. Climate change
- C. The exotic pet trade
- D. Habitat loss

Answers:

1. C, 2. C, 3. B, 4. D (These things are all threats to turtles, but habitat loss has the greatest impact)



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