



Athol Bird and Nature Club

Fall '04 Newsletter

Volume 40, Number 3

President's Letter

It seems hard to believe that 40 years have passed since a bunch of Junior High kids got all wrapped up in birds by following around our 8th grade science teacher. The Athol Bird and Nature Club has evolved in many ways since those carefree years. We are now over 300 members strong and September brings a new membership year for the Club and our fifth year of managing the Millers River Environmental Center where our community, school, and stewardship programs are flourishing.

Many of us have supported the effort with countless volunteer hours, donations, and grants all contributing to the Club and Center's program success. The lease with the town of Athol comes up for renewal in two years and now the time has come for us to consider the long-range future of the wonderful Environmental Center we have all helped to establish and come to enjoy.

To fully support the operations of the Millers River Environmental Center, we are initiating an Annual Appeal in addition to regular dues. By establishing an annual giving program, the Club will be able to support the Center's operations, direct more resources to programs, and extend open hours for visitors.

The Officers and Directors of the Club set the target of this year's annual fund at \$50,000. This amount is approximately one third of our projected costs for all of our programs and expenses related to running the Millers River Environmental Center.

A strong level of support to the Annual Appeal from members and friends this year will help guide the Club leaders as they craft a five-year plan for the Center. Our appeal letter should arrive soon, but if you would like to make a donation now, please add a note with your contribution that it is for the Annual Appeal.

I extend a heartfelt thank-you to all members and friends of the Club for their continuing support. Volunteers remain at the core of our leadership and activities. The added responsibilities of the building have broadened our work in the community, added strong partner organizations, and complimented our mission- to enhance appreciation for, connection with, and stewardship of the rich natural resources of the region.

I look forward to joining you at Club activities in the field and at the Center.

Dave Small

Officers and Directors of the Athol Bird and Nature Club

President: Dave Small **Vice President:** James Mallet **Treasurer:** Robert Coyle

Membership Secretary: Susan Bredesen **Office Manager:** Lisa M. Divoll

Directors: David Caldwell, Barbara Coyle, Lula Field, Susan Heinricher, Rick Magee, Robert Mallet, Kathy Morris, Jacob Morris-Siegel, John O'Keefe **Directors Emeritus:** Jane O'Regan, Laurencia Rousell

Millers River Environmental Center

Executive Director: Sue Cloutier

100 Main Street, Athol, MA 01331 WEB: www.millersriver.net PHONE: (978) 248-9491

Program Updates: from the Millers River Environmental Center

Schools



John O'Keefe explains
Harvard Forest research

As part of our environmental education outreach to schools in the region, Center staff collaborated with Harvard Forest on the development of a summer institute where teachers learned about ongoing forest research and schoolyard projects for their students that parallel scientific studies. Students have begun to explore their schoolyard, track information on tree species and look for signs of changing leaf color. School programs are funded by Harvard Forest, Massachusetts Environmental Trust, and the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts.

Coaches from the Center continue to assist teachers in Orange and Warwick as they develop community-based studies that incorporate multiple disciplines and include service-learning projects. Last year Susie Mosher's class created a Habitat Study Area just outside the Dexter Park School while classes at Butterfield School organized a Salmon Freedom Parade for the release of salmon raised by students in Demil Kovacevic's classroom. The whole school turned out for the salmon release event, and it made the evening news.

Teachers are encouraged to contact us through the Center if they would like to work with us on environmental studies; we can facilitate field trips, visits to the Center, and classroom presentations.



Students create a front garden at
Dexter Park



Habitat study area at Dexter Park

Events for school programs:

This academic year, on the first Tuesday of each month, teachers engaged in community-based studies are invited to come to the Center for a pot-luck supper. Teachers will have time to share their work and discuss program implementation in a relaxed and supportive setting. If you are a teacher doing local environmental studies and would like to participate, please contact Sue Cloutier sue@millersriver.net or call 978-248-9491.

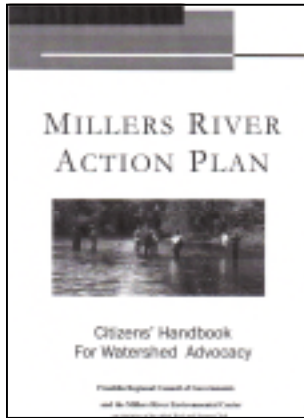
Stewardship

Since the State discontinued the Watershed Initiative early in 2003, the Club was funded by the Greater Worcester Community Foundation to continue team meetings and support our monitoring programs. Watershed volunteer monitoring efforts continue in the Millers River basin thanks to the leadership efforts of Greg McGuane and, most recently, Ivan Ussack as well as volunteers from the Club taking time to do fieldwork. On September 28, many attended an end of the season celebration.

One of the volunteer tasks is to follow a stream from its origin to the Millers River, another documents stream side conditions by taking pictures four times a year in each season, and we also have volunteers monitoring river conditions from canoes or kayaks. If you are interested in joining volunteers in any of these watershed monitoring activities, please contact Ivan at 978-724-0108 or leave a message at the Center at 978-248-9491.



Volunteer Monitoring site



Last year, with funding from and working with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, a Five Year Action Plan was developed for the Millers River. We summarized much of the plan in a short Citizens' Handbook that is available from the Center. Please call the Center if you would like a copy of the Handbook.

With grant funding from the Massachusetts Environmental Trust, Matt Hickler is conducting an extensive study of area lakes and ponds to characterize their biodiversity. This information will be helpful to landowners as they make decisions regarding development and conservation on adjacent properties.

As part of a river restoration project funded by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, we continue to work with landowners at the New Home Dam in Orange to enable the construction of a passage way for American Eels to get upstream of the dam.

Additional funding for stewardship programs has been provided by the Millers River Watershed Council.

Events for stewardship programs:

Basin Team Meetings are open to anyone interested in clean water. Meetings are held at the Center and provide updates on watershed protection issues and volunteer monitor training. These one to two hour meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of each month. We plan to continue alternating afternoon and evening meetings through June of 2005. To receive further meeting information, please sign up at the Center.

Community

The Millers River Environmental Center community meeting rooms are used by many organizations; Millers River Greenway, Watershed Council, Trout Unlimited, Watershed Team, New England Forestry Foundation, The Trustees of Reservations, New England Equestrian Association, North Quabbin Community Coalition, Frontier Club, Kingsman Chess Club, and others. To arrange to use one of the meeting rooms at the Center, please call 978-248-9491 or email abnc@millersriver.net .

Check our events page in this newsletter for other events held at the Center and our website for Club and partner organization updates. www.millersriver.net



Community canoeing event

Events for community programs:



Nature's Beauty: The Order Odonata—photo gallery contains a selection of Massachusetts Dragonflies and Damselflies on display for public viewing at the Millers River Environmental Center now through the end of November 2004. All insects were photographed by Glenn Corbiere in their natural surroundings, and are un-posed. A raffle will be held for one of the photos on display. Tickets may be purchased at any of our Club events held at the Center. Please contact the Center for more details at (978) 248-9491.

The 2nd Annual AMC North Quabbin Outdoor Expo will be held at the Millers River Environmental Center on Saturday, January 8, 2005. This event is sponsored by Appalachian Mountain Club, North Quabbin Woods Project, and ABNC.

Vendors of sporting goods, outdoor organizations that provide guide services and promoting stewardship will be showing information and equipment for sale.



Outdoor experience workshops will also be running at the Center throughout the day. Related outdoor events are also planned, so come to get the gear and information.

The North Quabbin Garden Tour will be held on Sunday, July 17, 2005. Please contact the Center for more information, to offer your garden as a destination, or to contribute volunteer support for this major fundraising event.



North Quabbin Garden Tour 2004

Fall Events 2004

**Most club programs and events are free and open to the public.
Events with other collaborating organizations are also listed below.
Reasonable accommodations available upon request.**

*For information on program additions, changes due to weather, or to register;
please call (978) 248-9491, visit our web site www.millersriver.net, or email abnc@millersriver.net*

Now through November 30, Nature's Beauty: The Order Odonata—photo gallery

A selection of Massachusetts Dragonflies and Damselflies are currently on display for public viewing at the Millers River Environmental Center now through the end of November 2004. All insects were photographed by Glenn Corbiere in their natural surroundings, and are un-posed. A raffle will be held for one of the photos on display. Tickets may be purchased at any of our Club events held at the Center. Please contact the Center for more details at (978) 248-9491.

October 9, Saturday, 10 am, Fall Foliage and Nature Walk

Join Susan Heinricher and Dianne Salcedo to explore the history and natural feature of North Orange. This event, sponsored by the Orange Library, will start at the Moore-Leland Library in North Orange.

October 10, Sunday, 1 pm, Field Study of Bird Behavior

Accessible birding for everyone, beginners and experts alike, will gather for these short field trips taking time to pay attention to details of bird behavior. Join Joe Superchi and Sue Cloutier, Dave Small or other ABNC trip leaders on these events for new and expert birders. Please call ahead, 978-248-9491, if you need transportation. Meet at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol.

October 13, Wednesday, 7 pm

ABNC Club Meeting: The Phenomenon of Autumn Foliage Coloration

Join us at ABNC's meeting with guest speaker, Dr. David Lee, a professor at Florida International University in Miami. Dr. Lee will share with us the inside story of fall color. He worked at the Harvard Forest as a Bullard Fellow in 1998 and is continuing his research this autumn. The public is invited to join Club members for this meeting at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol.

October 17, Sunday, 8 am, Fall Migrants with Dave Small

Deb Carey and Massachusetts Audubon members from Broadmeadow Brook will join us as we guide them, exploring our favorite places in the North Quabbin region. Please register for this event before Thursday, October 14 by calling 978-248-9491; leave your contact info and we will confirm trip details.

November 6, Saturday, 12:30 pm, Massachusetts Bird of Prey Rehabilitation Facility Visit

Bob Coyle has arranged this trip to visit Tom Ricardi's in Conway, Mass. The trip is for members only and space is limited. To register, please call Bob at 978-249-6083.

November 7, Sunday, Quabbin Trip

Dave Small will take Club members on this day-long exploration of the Quabbin. Reservations are required. Call the Center 978-248-9491 to leave your contact info and we will confirm trip details.

November 10, Wednesday, 6 pm, ABNC Members' Dinner and Silent Auction in North Orange

Join or renew your membership in the Club and enjoy the meal with other ABNC members, staff, and board at the Community Church in North Orange. Dinner tickets are available to members for \$12.

Members can also contribute a natural history item for the auction. Call Bob Coyle at 978-249-6083 for further information and to reserve. The multi-media program, described below, follows the meal.

7 pm, Public Program, Birding: A Multi-media Visual Experience

Shawn Carey will share his views on some of this country's most beautiful birds through this slide/video production. Shawn combines his expertise as a birder and photographer in this engaging and informative program. The silent auction follows the presentation.

This event will be held at the Community Church in North Orange.

November 22, Tuesday, 1 pm, Accessible Birding

Accessible birding for everyone, beginners and experts alike, will gather for these short field trips taking time to pay attention to details of bird behavior. Join Joe Superchi and Sue Cloutier, Dave Small or other ABNC trip leaders on these events for new and expert birders. Please call ahead, 978-248-9491, if you need transportation. Meet at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol.

Save these dates for upcoming events:

December 8, Wednesday, 7 pm, ABNC Meeting

John O'Keefe, director of the Fisher Museum and forest scientist, will present an update on the long-term research and programs of Harvard Forest.

December 18, Saturday, all day, Christmas Bird Count

Contact Dave Small for additional information and participate in this annual event. dhsml@gis.net or 978-249-2094

January 8, Saturday, AMC North Quabbin Outdoor Expo

All day event with vendors and outdoor organizations presenting workshops.

January 12, Wednesday, 7 pm, ABNC Meeting: Adventures in Peru

Through his stories and slides, Rick Magee will transport us to Peru, a land of warmth and wonder.

July 17, Sunday, North Quabbin Garden Tour Details to follow

Ongoing events:

Events for teachers

First Tuesday of each month, teachers engage in community-based studies and hold a pot-luck supper. Teachers interested in local environmental studies, please contact Sue Cloutier at 978-248-9491.

Events for watershed stewards

Basin Team Meetings at the Center are open to the public. Join us October 12 at 1 pm, November 9 at 6 pm, and December 14 at 1 pm. To receive further meeting information, please sign up at the Center.

Share your adventures

If you have an interesting tale to tell about your adventures with wildlife, books you would recommend others to read, or wildlife photographs, please share it with us by sending them for inclusion into future newsletters. Email to abnc@millersriver.net or mail to the Athol Bird and Nature Club at 100 Main Street, Athol, MA 01331

Japanese birdwatching - by Rachel Scherer

Last March, I was invited to Japan to lecture at the Department of Biological Engineering at Osaka University. My hosts were kind enough to inquire what activities I might enjoy outside the schedule of meetings and lectures. When asked if there was a birdwatching club at the University or in the community, Professor Ujijama replied he had never heard of such a thing, but he would do his utmost to find out.



When I arrived, I was delighted to discover they had found out what birdwatching meant and arrangements had been made. The graduate students assigned to escort me were obviously disgruntled at having drawn this duty. One of my guardians was from the Phillipines, and spoke English well, but almost no Japanese; the other was Japanese and spoke almost no English. Osaka's transit system was so vast and many-branched that even these two residents were challenged with finding the meeting place for the birding trip. My guides were busy asking directions when I gestured to let them know I found the group! Beside a placard with "wild Bird Society of Japan" printed on it were the khaki clad, floppy hat and rubber boot wearing, binocular strapped bird enthusiasts. After a week of feeling "Lost in Translation", I was filled with a rush of happiness at the familiar – I had found my people!



The Wild Bird Society of Japan, Osaka Chapter, was holding its monthly bird walk. One of the group leaders, Masahiro Hashimoto, spoke excellent English. There was considerable excitement, in that over 30 years of these walks, I was the first foreigner who had joined them. Most of the members had a large pin on their hat or jacket with a color photo of a bird on it, indicating their "club name" – Masahiro is known as "Goshawk". A couple of other gentlemen spoke some English, but once we got under way walking along the Yudo River, the excitement of spotting and sharing bird ID's made for easy sharing even in uncommon languages. Most of the birders had

sets of color photo index cards rather than field guides, and while sometimes we converged on a common name for a genus, most of the time I was unable to get a latin name to write down and look up later. I have my checklist of the day's tally of 96 species in Japanese common names– if you know anyone who can read kanji and also knows birds, please let me know! Some of the highlights for me which I was able to positively ID were: Grey Headed Lapwing, Kentish (Snowy) Plover, Dusky Thrush, Carrion Crow, Jungle Crow, Great Crested Grebe, Reed Bunting, Meadow Bunting, and two different wagtails I have yet to figure out. I was also thrilled with the local park ducks: the Common Pochard and the Tufted Duck.

The Yudo River is the largest in Osaka Prefecture, and very little native riparian habitat remains. Most of the riverbank, for miles and miles, is now riprap or concrete dikes, with only small intermittent

patches of vegetation. The river mouth has lots of commercial boating traffic, and further upstream, recreational boating wakes are causing excessive erosion of the banks. Masahiro and the club are very engaged in the community and political activism necessary to try and avert the final destruction of what remains of Yudo's wetlands. I had a strong sense of connection to these warm and engaging people through their enthusiastic birding and commitment to habitat preservation.



Birdclub

As we sat by the river at the end of the walk, Masahiro invited me to “say a few words” to the group, which he would translate. This gave me the chance to thank them, and to tell them about ABNC and MREC, and how we share the pleasures of birding and the responsibilities of conservation with them from afar. It is really strengthening to appreciate that each small group's incremental achievements are in the context of a worldwide effort.

Thank you to Club members and partners at the Center for ongoing support. The Center keeps its doors open to hundreds of people with the support from participants, foundations, members and donors.

Our resource library continues to grow thanks to book donations from Stan Bolton, James Baird, Quabbin Mediation, and Shaun Bennett.

The 2004 Garden tour was a beautiful success this year. We would like to thank Jody Russell-Blakie, Mike Woodward, Rose Marie Thoms, Diane and Gary Pond, Rick and Kirsten Stemple, Pam and Penny Smith, Peggy DeJackome, Steve Smith, Maple Valley Farm, Diane Salcedo and Bob Michaud, Deirdre and Dan Kimball, Dick and Jeanette Hall, Ginny and Bruce Jones, Clare Green, Tom Ziniti, Jan Conover, Lois and Fred Provost, Susan Heinricher and David Young, Keith and Joni Sidilau, and Theresa Superchi for the hard work that went into preparing their gardens for the public to view.



Garden Tour 2004

Also thank you to Noel's Nursery, Lu's Flower and gifts, and Agway; Sue Bredesen, Diane and Bob of Maple Valley Farm, and Jan Conover for their help with ticket sales; Bob Coyle, who led a bird walk; Carl Kamp, who led a butterfly walk; and Dave Small, who helped us find many butterflies, birds, and dragonflies in the gardens. And a very special thank you from all of us goes to Susan Heinricher for the masterful organization of the entire event!



ABNC FUN PAGE

FISH, AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

1. A ___ in the grass.
2. The ___ and the hare.
3. He's ___ ing for an answer.
4. "I have a ___ in my throat!"
5. Hydra, the largest constellation in the Sky, represents a _____.



6. ___ plantain is an evergreen woodland plant.
7. The yellow, ___ tongue, is a spring lily.
8. Mushrooms are often called ___ stools.
9. "Watch out for loan ___".
10. ___ bush flowers very early in the spring.



11. The purple ___ weed blooms in mid-summer along the edge of many ponds.
12. Capricornus is a part goat, part ___, Constellation.
13. ___ bird, is another name for the anHINGA.
14. In Spanish, Galapagos means ___.
15. He's as slippery as an ___.



16. "Hold a ___ and you will get warts!"
17. The ___ Papers, turned out to be forgeries. (Salt Lake City)
18. The ___ River is named for one of the 2 poisonous lizards.
19. "She shed ___ tears"
20. The snap ___ is a popular garden flower.



CAN YOU FILL IN THE MISSING TERMS?

MAMMALS & BIRDS

1. "As dead as a ___".
2. As graceful as a ___.
3. Proud as a ___.
4. Poor as a church ___.
5. Sly as a ___.
6. The ___ of Happiness.
7. She's crazy as a ___.
8. As welcome as a ___ at a tea party.
9. To mimic is to ___.
10. Or to ___.



11. As wise as an ___.
12. A ___ in ___.
13. ___ clothing.
14. Like an ___ with its head in the sand.
15. "Great weather for ___".



16. She has the memory of an ___.
17. Don't ___ down your food!
18. He's sitting in the ___ seat.
19. Choose the lady or the ___.
20. He's a stool ___.



21. The ___ of peace.
22. "That's a ___ of a different color".
23. The ___ is the ship of the desert.
24. One ___ doesn't make a spring.
25. Bruce has ___ eyes.



www.millersriver.net
We're on the Web!

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Fax: 978-248-2020

Phone: 978-248-9491

Athol, MA 01331

100 Main Street

Athol Bird & Nature Club

U.S. Postage
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Athol, MA

Athol Bird and Nature Club Membership Application 2004 – 2005

Please mark all that apply _____ New Member or _____ Renew

Name: _____	_____ Student/Senior	\$ 5.00
Address: _____	_____ Individual	\$ 10.00
Town: _____	_____ Family	\$ 15.00
State & Zip+4: _____	_____ Contributor	\$ 25.00
Phone: _____	_____ Patron	\$ 50.00
E-mail: _____	_____ Benefactor	\$100.00

Send membership gift card with your name: _____ Yes _____ No

Gift from: _____

Make check payable to: **Athol Bird and Nature Club**

Club Decal for:



100 Main Street, Athol, MA 01331

_____ outside of window \$ 1.00

_____ inside of window \$ 1.00

* Donation to the Millers River Environmental Center \$ _____

Dues in excess of \$10.00 and all donations are tax-deductible

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

* Athol Bird and Nature Club manages the Millers River Environmental Center. Your additional donation allows us to exhibit the ABNC natural history collection, collaborate with other environmental and community groups, and host natural history programs and activities.

ABNC membership year is from September through August.

Please renew if your mailing label indicates your membership has expired. Thank You!