Hiding in Plain Sight: 
Surprises Await When You Take A Closer Look  
by Karla Briggs

Sometimes it is hard to ignore the wildlife around us, like when a flock of gobbling turkeys struts past or when a deer bounds by, flashing its large white tail. Other times, we need to slow down and look to see what is growing, flying, and crawling about us. If we take the time to observe the living things in our path, we start to notice details that make us curious, and we learn little clues about lives that are different from our own.

Any time outside can be an opportunity to see something new, whether it is a short trip out in a yard, a walk along a quiet road, or a hike along a trail on conservation land. Even places that seem quiet and unused are habitats for countless plants, animals, and other organisms. Using a camera or cell phone to photograph the natural world can help you capture important details and share your findings with others.

Various apps are available to help identify species, and some apps have opportunities to share your observations with other citizens and scientists.

For children and families who are looking for an easy way to explore the outdoors, iNaturalist has an app called Seek, which uses image recognition software to quickly identify species from cell phone photos. This app is an excellent tool to encourage children to notice and appreciate the diversity of life around them. The iNaturalist app can be used to identify and learn about plants, insects, amphibians, birds, and other living things. You can create an account to add observations that

The Common Eastern Bumblebee (Bombus impatiens) is abundant in Massachusetts and has not declined in number the way that many other bumblebee species have. This type of bumblebee has a distinct separation between the areas of yellow and black coloration.

Photo by Reeves Briggs

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Common Ground is published twice a year and mailed free to every resident.

Keep up with the BCTrust on Facebook (Like us!): facebook.com/bctrustorg/

Email: A periodic email with updates on events and activities. If you’re a BCTrust member and we have your current email address, you’re already included. If not, sign up online: bctrust.org/email/

The Boxborough Conservation Trust is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.
you have made, along with the location and date. Your observations can become part of databases used by scientists and may provide valuable information about where species are found and at what times of the year they are present.

Massachusetts has a fascinating array of native pollinators, including many species of butterflies, bees, and other insects. Some types of pollinators, including many bumblebee species, are declining in numbers. The Beecology app can help you learn about bumblebees, and you can participate in research being conducted at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. By photographing bumblebees as they visit flowers, you can help gather data about where various species live in Massachusetts and which plants are preferred sources for pollen and nectar.

You never know what surprises you will find when you slow your pace and focus on the world around you. See the photos for a few examples of some common plants and insects around our area.

Above: Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (Papilio glaucus) butterflies are easy to identify by their yellow wings with black stripes. Each hindwing has a small “tail,” which is characteristic of the swallowtail family. With a wingspan of over 4 inches, it is easy to spot this type of butterfly between May and August.

Buttonbush (Cephalanthus occidentalis) is a native shrub that grows to about 12 feet in height and tends to be found near wetlands, ponds, and streams. Buttonbush blooms from June to August with balls of small white flowers.

Left: Hummingbird Moths (Hemaris thysbe) may be seen hovering over flowers during the day during the late spring and through the summer. These moths have a wingspan of about 1.5-2 inches and have reddish-brown and olive coloration. If you look closely, you may notice this insect using its long proboscis to drink nectar.

From Merriam-Webster
es-ker ɪˈe-skər
Definition of esker
A long narrow ridge or mount of sand, gravel, and boulders deposited by a stream flowing on, within, or beneath a stagnant glacier.

Henry David Thoreau on Boxboro:
“On any moral question, I would rather have the opinion of Boxboro’ than of Boston and New York put together. When the former speaks, I feel as if somebody had spoken, as if humanity was yet, and a reasonable being had asserted its rights—as if some unprejudiced men among the country’s hills had at length turned their attention onto the subject, and by a few sensible words redeemed the reputation of the race.”

Source: “Slavery in Massachusetts” an essay written based on his lecture delivered at an Anti-Slavery Celebration in Framingham, MA on July 4, 1854, after the conviction of fugitive slave Anthony Burns in Boston.

Henry David Thoreau made two visits to Boxborough and Inches Woods in November 1860. He described Inches Wood as “just the most remarkable and memorable thing in Boxboro.”

“The handsomest thing I saw in Boxboro was this noble stand of oak wood. I doubt if there is a finer one in Massachusetts. Let her keep it a century longer, and men will make pilgrimages to it from all parts of the country.”

Up with Uplands!
These upland woods are important for protecting our water resources! A recent study of natural groundwater storage reservoirs in New England by UMass hydrologist David Boutt found that upland aquifer systems dominated by thin deposits of surface till—a jumbled mess of rocks and gravel deposited by glaciers—make up about 70% of the active and dynamic water storage for the region. (UMass news office, 2017) These uplands are also home to amphibians like spotted salamanders that breed in the vernal pools in the lowlands.

Grady Land
Inches Woods
Shurtleff Woods
Beaver Brook Valley Preserve
Letter from the President

“You should sit in nature for 20 minutes a day, unless you are busy... then you should sit for an hour.”
—ancient Zen saying, anonymous

Last April, scientists found this quote to be mostly true (Frontiers in Psychology, April 4, 2019). As little as twenty minutes a day in nature can reduce stress hormone levels. I was hoping an hour would prove even more effective, but, based on the study, the peak effect of stress reduction was found at twenty to thirty minutes of time spent by walking or sitting quietly and engaging with a green natural area including urban parks. And, the beneficial impact was found regardless of the time of day. As our lives have been upended by the COVID-19 pandemic, I hope all of you are finding comfort walking Boxborough’s trails or being uplifted by the views of nature from the road. With blooms, birds, and butterflies, we can find some relief from the uncertainty and disruption by spending time outdoors. If you or a family member has become ill because of the COVID virus, I wish you the best for a full recovery.

Congratulations to all of the Blanchard Memorial Elementary School Art Contest winners! Their art work is published in this issue. Thank you to our art contest coordinator, Charlet Mallett, to Pam Fleming for coordinating the judging, and to all the students who participated.

Did you download your BCTrust Art Contest Contestants coloring book?
You can do so from the BCTrust’s website bctrust.org. The downloadable coloring book is a superb idea by Charlet Mallett as a way of celebrating all the artists, and to provide another activity for children during the COVID crisis.

The success of the writing and art contests at Blanchard Memorial Elementary School is due in large part to the support of the school principal, Mr. Dana Labb, and the teachers. Eileen Barnett has been the instrumental art teacher at Blanchard Memorial School since the art contest was resurrected in 2004. For the past seventeen contests she has encouraged and made this contest possible and now she’s retiring. Thank you Mrs. Barnett and we wish you the best!

The BCTrust Board welcomes Karla Briggs as our newest board member and author of the featured article in this issue. Her skills and enthusiasm are welcomed as she is coordinating BCTrust Stewardship.

Thank you to Lynn Horsky, our editor, and to Brad Gray who took a well-earned “time out” for this issue. Everyone who attended the BCTrust event last December was thoroughly engaged as board member Tom Bieber presented his photos and experience hiking the entire Appalachian Trail. Thanks to Tom and Brigid Bieber for hosting this very enjoyable evening.

Rita Grossman, President
Boxborough Conservation Trust
Q. What makes BCTrust’s mission powerful or meaningful for you?
A. As an all-volunteer non-profit organization, I like the fact that I can do something meaningful in my town that will have a lasting impact to our environment.

Q. What interests you most/what is your special interest in the work of the BCTrust?
A. Working with the Board to manage our resources including land and the contributions of our members to conserve land, especially to promote sustainability of water and air quality.

Q. What are some of your gifts/prior leadership experiences that you feel you bring to the board/greater community?

A. I worked in bank operations for 32 years and managed the servicing of some of the world’s largest investment companies, ultimately leading a global team of over 3,200 people in 27 countries. In 2018, I completed a 2,190 mile thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail.

Q. What does success for the BCTrust look like to you?
A. I would measure our success as: maintaining and increasing the number of members from the community, managing our existing land successfully, and protecting more land when the opportunity arises.

Q. What motivates you to continue the work in your community?
A. I grew up camping and enjoying the outdoors; family vacations were to campgrounds and not theme parks. As an adult, I’ve been blessed to see so many beautiful places that were conserved and protected by our forebears and my goal as a board member of BCTrust is to do as much as I can locally, so that future generations have the opportunity to have clean water and air, places to enjoy nature and to have the benefit of a quiet moment in the woods that can’t be replaced by anything else I’ve ever felt.

Q. What makes BCTrust’s mission powerful or meaningful for you?
A. The preservation and protection of land is critical, and not just for wildlife: people need nature, we need to see and feel the fields and woods, to walk them, breathe them in and smell their sweetness. It’s how we know we are human and alive. Being in nature connects us with our history and that of the peoples who came before us.

Q. What interests you most/what is your special interest in the work of the BCTrust?
A. Conservation of land, protection of wildlife, and preserving natural Boxborough for future generations.

Jeanne Kangas

Jeanne Kangas, continued page 5
Jeanne Kangas, continued

Q. What makes BCTrust’s mission powerful or meaningful for you?
A. Since I was born and raised in Boxborough, I know a lot of our older landowners, especially. I grew up with many of them; and encourage them to share my concern and support for preserving land and open space, whether upland or swamp. We are not the only animals on this earth, and must share it with those dependent on how we manage our land.

Q. What does success for the BCTrust look like to you?
A. Success is cultivating and nurturing a love of nature in our residents that is well-received, loyally supported, and fully financed.

Q. What motivates you to continue the work in your community?
A. The people—my neighbors and the other members of our Board.

Lisa St. Amand, clerk

Q. What makes BCTrust’s mission powerful or meaningful for you?
A. The local environment shapes our daily lives and directly affects our well-being. During almost 30 years of living in Boxborough, easy access to woods and fields has benefited my entire family. By preserving open space, the BCTrust works to keep our collective obligation to maintain a healthy environment for future generations of people, plants, and wildlife.

Q. What interests you most/what is your special interest in the work of the BCTrust?
A. My main interest in the Trust’s work is in preserving and making accessible our valuable ecological resources.

Lisa St. Amand, continued page 8

BCTrust ART Contest 2020
Congratulations to the 4th-grade Blanchard Memorial Elementary School Artists

Thank you to art teacher Eileen Bartlett and volunteer coordinator Charlet Mallett

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE BLANCHARD ARTISTS’ COLORING BOOK @bctrust.org
Boxborough Conservation Trust Members  Thank You to our 146 current members!

Anonymous (4)
Jeannine Ameduri
Charlotte and Steve Arnold
Alana and Russ Askey
Cord Awtry and Heather Fleming
JoEllen Baird and Hal Rosenstock
Audrey Ball #
David and Eileen Barnett
Dave and Maureen Barr
Douglas W. Barrus
Mark White/Pascale Belin-White
The Berkley Family
The Bieber Family
Barbara Birt
The Nelson Family
Reeves and Karla Briggs
The Brolin Family
The Reg Brown Family
David Bull and Laurel Dickson-Bull
Scott & Pam Bundy *
Simon Bunyard and Laurel Zimmerman *
Kristine Burgess and Jim Comolli
The Campbell Family
The Carter Family
The Chavez Family
The Ciccone Family
Susan Clark
Pam Collins and Jim Moss
Frank and Emilie Coolidge *
Margaret and Andrew Covell
Zhenghuan Cui
Todd & Patty Davis
Heidi and James Dempsey
Paul Dingle
Dionne/Loughlin Family
Dresser Family
Sharon Duquette
Fred and Margot Dushin
Jessica Eichelburg and Fred Waugh & Family
Inna and Leo Epstein
Nancy Evans
Susan Evans
The Fabian Family
John Fallon
Les and Gladys Fox *
Jo and Gerry Gaebel
Cesar and Sharon Garde
Anne Gardulski
Travis Gebhardt
Jack and Karen Geissert
Larry & Rita Grossman
The Glidden Family *
Betty and Bill Graham
Brad and Ginny Gray
Susan and Martin Green
Warner Guild #
Bruce Hager
Tom Haggerty
Doug and Kathi Haney
Brad and Sue Hardie
The Hardy Family
The Harris Family
Neal and Leigh Hesler
The Hinds Family
Michael and Diane Hoff
Linda Hoffman & Blase Provotola #
Dan and Leslie Hogan
Jim and Teresa Howie
Jim and Lynn Hurley
George and Susan Johnson
Thomas and Patricia Johnson
Jeanne Steele Kangas *
Nicholas and Vivian Karafotias #
Adam Parker and Lee Ketelsen #
Edwin Knights
George C. Krusen II *
The Levesque Family
Bill and Michele Litant
Rick and Mikki MacDonald
Dan MacPhail and Pat Flanagan
Heather and Karl Malakian
D.R. Mani & Lakshmi Kaja
Liz and John Markiewicz
Cindy Markowitz and Family
David and Kathy Mayo
The McCarthy Family
David McKiernan and Mary Sullivan
Rob and Anne McNeece
Susan Mitchell-Hardt and David Hardt#
Marshall Moore
Pat and Mimi Moran #
Bunny Morse
Suzanne R. Morse *
Claudia and Al Murphy
Sheila Murphy
Chips and David Naparstek
Marcia Nelson
Frances Nolde and Hugh Fortmiller
Anne Marie and Bruce Osler
Jonathan and Jessie Panek #
Janet Weisenberger and John Pullerits
Cynthia Regan
Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm P. Reid
Dennis and Abby Reip
Scott and Judy Reiter
Janice Rejto and Abby Rejto
Paul and Sue Rey and Family #
William Rodgers and Karen Gillespie
Alan and Mary Rohwer
The Russo Family
Barbara and Hal Salzman
Jayne Sanborn
The Santoro Family
Gary and Kathie Schwarting
Rosemary Sedgwick
The Seger Family
Shari Shane #
Nora Shine and Martin Flohr
The Sidwell Family
John P. and Lynn Skinner
The Skorczeski Family
Dan Smith
Clelia Solis #
David and Lisa St. Amand *
Ronald B. Steese and Jennie L. Rawski
Todd Stout
The Symancyk Family
Dan and Kathy Tappan *
The Thompson Family
Christine and Walter van Roggen
Arden and Niki Veley
F. Channing Wagg
The Waligory Family
Matthew Walker
The Warwick Family
Bucky Weaver
The Westlin Family
Ed and Colleen Whitcomb
Carol White
The Wilfert Family
John and Maureen Yaukoes
Tara Zantow and Tim Blankenship
The Zupicich Family

* Charter Member (donated $500 or more before first annual meeting in 1999)
# Non-Boxborough resident

Photo by Simon Bunyard
New Member Registration Form

The Boxborough Conservation Trust is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. We are actively seeking new members to join in the effort of preserving and protecting Boxborough’s undeveloped land. Anyone may join. Regular (voting) members must be 18 years of age or older and must be Boxborough residents. All others are honorary members. Membership is on an annual basis.

There are several membership levels. All donations are tax deductible, to the extent allowed by law.

- $30 Member
- $60 Family
- $100 Associate
- $250 Patron
- $500 Sustaining
- $1000 Sponsor
- $2500 Preservationist
- $_____________ Other

Name(s)______________________________________________________________
(please print)

Address________________________________________      (_____)_____-_______
(street)           (telephone)
____________________________________________________________________
(town)     (state)    (zip)

Date____/____/_____     e-mail____________________________________________

Please indicate how you would like your name(s) to appear in our membership listings, such as ‘The Jones Family,’ or ‘John and Jane Jones,’ or if you prefer, you can just say ‘anonymous.’

Membership Listing: __________________________________________________

Please make your check payable to The Boxborough Conservation Trust, and mail it with this form to:

Treasurer
Boxborough Conservation Trust
650 Massachusetts Ave.
Boxborough, MA 01719

We will mail you a donation acknowledgment suitable for tax reporting purposes. Please contact your employer to see if they will match your contribution.

Your comments and suggestions would be very much appreciated:
Q&A

Lisa St. Amand, continued

Q. What are some of your gifts/prior leadership experiences that you feel you bring to the board/greater community?
A. Alongside a lifelong interest in conservation issues, I bring to the table a background in environmental law and prior experience on the Boxborough Zoning Board of Appeals.

Q. What does success for the BCTrust look like to you?
A. My vision of BCTrust’s success is a well-stewarded network of interconnected conservation lands that are cherished by and accessible to the residents of our Town.

Q. What motivates you to continue the work in your community?
A. Our environment is under a tremendous amount of stress everywhere, and acting locally while thinking globally is part of the solution.

Q. What are some of your gifts/prior leadership experiences that you feel you bring to the board/greater community?
A. Love of the outdoors, but also a technical background (I run our website, email, and more).

Q. What does success for the BCTrust look like to you?
A. All of our highest priority parcels are protected and we move to purely maintenance and community education.

Q. What motivates you to continue the work in your community?
A. There are still so many parcels that are not protected and are beautiful pieces of land.

Q. What are some of your gifts/prior leadership experiences that you feel you bring to the board/greater community?
A. Providing protected spaces for flora and fauna that the residents of Boxborough can enjoy.

Q. What interests you most/what is your special interest in the work of the BCTrust?
A. Maintaining the trails and spaces that we manage, and creating experiences for residents that are less able to enjoy the trails due to mobility issues (more on this soon).

Q. What does success for the BCTrust look like to you?
A. All of our highest priority parcels are protected and we move to purely maintenance and community education.

Q. What motivates you to continue the work in your community?
A. There are still so many parcels that are not protected and are beautiful pieces of land.

WATCH OUT FOR TICKS. When hiking the trails, wear long pants and bug repellent as ticks will be more than happy to join you. Always do a full-body tick check when you get home. For more information, visit the state’s helpful and informative website: mass.gov/info-details/tick-borne-disease-prevention