

# 2017 NORCROSS WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

## WINTER LECTURE SERIES

Winter lectures at the Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary are offered free of charge on Saturdays at 1:30 pm. Space is limited; call **413-267-9654** or email [lectures@norcrosswildlife.org](mailto:lectures@norcrosswildlife.org) to register. In case of inclement weather please call ahead, check our Facebook page or visit [www.norcrosswildlife.org](http://www.norcrosswildlife.org).

**Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup>**

### Discovering New England's Stone Walls

How and why did New England come to acquire its thousands of miles of stone walls? How were these, and other dry stone structures, built? **Kevin Gardner**, author of *The Granite Kiss* and stone wall builder specializing in restoration, will speak about stone walls touching on history, technique, stylistic development and aesthetics. He will discuss restoration tips and techniques, information about design, acquisition of materials and preservation. You are encouraged to bring up specific problems or projects on your property. Along the way, Kevin will build a miniature table-top wall using tiny stones from a five-gallon bucket.

**Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup>**

### Conserving the Timber Rattlesnake in Massachusetts

The proposal to introduce the Timber Rattlesnake to the Quabbin Reservoir has engendered a great deal of controversy. Efforts to protect the species have been met with many challenges across the state, including the detection of an emerging fungal disease that can infect the snakes. **Anne Stengle**, a Ph.D. candidate at UMass Amherst whose most recent research focuses on the population genetics and ecology of the Timber Rattlesnake, will discuss the most recent threats to our remaining populations and current conservation plans for this snake.

**Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup>**

### Root Cellar or Native American Stone Chamber?

Many theories abound about the origin and purposes of the hundreds of stone chambers found in New England and New York. Two major theories have emerged to explain them as historic root cellars built by farmers or Native American ceremonial chambers. **James Gage & Mary Gage**, a mother and son research team with over 20 years of experience researching stone structures, will discuss recent archaeological and historical evidence that has determined both theories are correct. This presentation explores how to distinguish between the two. The Gages have co-authored several books and created the informative website: [www.stonestructures.org](http://www.stonestructures.org)

**Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup> - Sanctuary Closed for Presidents' Day**

**Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>**

### Vernal Pools and Their Denizens

With spring is just around the corner, Norcross Staff Naturalist **Jennifer Ohop** will provide an overview of the natural beauty and seasonal rhythm of these ephemeral ponds, filled "from snow that melted only yesterday."

**Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>**

### Gypsy Moth and Winter Moth

*Do you remember last summer?* **Joe Elkinton** has been a professor of entomology in the Dept. of Environmental Conservation at UMass Amherst since 1980. His lab conducts research on population dynamics and biological control of invasive forest insects, including winter moth, hemlock woolly adelgid, black oak gall wasp and gypsy moth. He is currently involved with efforts to introduce predatory beetles to control hemlock woolly adelgid and a tachinid parasitoid to control winter moth.

**Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>**

### Weird Sex in Nature: How Plants Get It On

One of the most romantic features of a plant is its flower, which we know is a major way that plants create new plants. You would think that plant sex is probably about as interesting as watching paint dry, right? Think again. The ways plants, algae, and fungi reproduce tell us a lot about how procreation has evolved over time. Join

**Elizabeth Farnsworth**, a Senior Research Ecologist with the New England Wild Flower Society, for this racy lecture about the many interesting reproductive strategies these species pursue. *Be prepared to blush.*

**Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup>**

## **From Pine Barrens to Whip-Poor-Wills**

Fire has played a critical role in shaping the post-glacial landscape of Massachusetts, resulting in a mosaic of highly specialized and occasionally quite rare ecosystems across the region. As modern attitudes about fire on the landscape have shifted toward exclusion and suppression a new set of ecological issues has arisen: everything from difficulty in regenerating oak forests to the near absence of the once common song of the whip-poor-will.

**Chris Buelow**, a Restoration Ecologist with the MA Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, will provide an introduction to fire history in Massachusetts, describe the fire adapted natural communities of our area, the processes that maintain these communities, the specialized plants and animals associated with them, and how these communities are being managed by various organizations today.

The Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary was established in 1939 by Arthur D. Norcross. Its present area includes thousands of acres of wooded hills, ponds and streams. It is maintained by the Norcross Wildlife Foundation, Inc. whose purpose is the conservation of wildlife and the active practice of conservation for the benefit of the public. This includes propagation of native plants, the preservation of birds and wildlife and the conservation of land and water.



Sanctuary hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 9:00am to 4:00pm. Trails are open, conditions permitting. There is no admission charge.

The Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary is located at 30 Peck Road in Wales, MA.

*Please use this address if you are navigating here with a GPS*