

Summer 2014

THE WACHUSETT VIEWS

*Quarterly e-Newsletter of the
Worcester Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club*



AMC Worcester Chair

Charlie Arsenault



Happy summer friends and members of the Worcester chapter. I hope you're making the most of the warmer weather and getting out on the trails, bike lanes, waterways, rocks, and any other outdoor spaces you enjoy.

In addition to being your Worcester Chapter Chair, I also volunteer as an instructor for the AMC Mountain Leadership School

(MLS). Last week I returned from my annual stint as an MLS instructor.

Mountain Leadership School is a 5 day experiential learning program designed to teach new and experienced backpackers about leading groups in the wilderness. The course is broken into a full day in the classroom to cover outdoor leadership basics, followed by four days backpacking in the White Mountains.

During the field portion, each student is provided an opportunity to lead the group (learn by doing). We throw a lot of planned and unplanned scenarios at our students. The experience challenges the students (and instructors) to better understand their strengths

and areas to improve as leaders. The result is a rewarding growth experience for all who participate.

Each session we graduate a new class of outdoor leaders who balance best practices for group safety with minimizing our impact on the wild spaces, while leading fun and rewarding hikes or backpacks.

If you'd like to read more about MLS, check out this article from the March/April 2014 edition of Outdoors magazine:

<http://www.outdoors.org/publications/outdoors/2014/features/learning-to-lead.cfm>

If you think MLS is for you, check out the August 6 – 10th, MLS for Day Hikers program at:

<http://www.outdoors.org/recreation/leadership/mls/index.cfm>

In this edition of Wachusett Views, you'll find great articles on the Daring Jumping spider (how do you keep a spider still enough to photograph?), LNT principles on Cairns (they are not just piles of rocks), and AMC's position on EPA plans to reduce carbon emissions. You'll also find out about several upcoming events. I'm especially excited about our Chapter's annual dinner. On November 8th we'll gather to celebrate the many volunteers and members who make our chapter great. This year we've booked a fantastic keynote speaker, Craig John. Craig is a renowned Mountaineer and guide who has 189 ascents of Mt. Rainier, over fifty high altitude expeditions worldwide including successful ascents of Everest by the North Ridge in Tibet, and Cho Oyu (the 6th highest in the world), 21 ascents of Kilimanjaro and ten expeditions to Denali.

Check out this edition's volunteer opportunities if you're looking to get more involved. Consider joining one of our open Committee positions, contributing to this newsletter, suggesting a bike ride, or by getting out and getting dirty during a work weekend on the Bay Circuit trail.

Welcome to summer and be sure to join us for outdoor fun.

Regards,

Charlie Arsenault, AMC Worcester Chapter Chair

Daring Jumping Spider

Phidippus audax

By Tim Loftus



This female Daring Jumping Spider doesn't make a web to catch her food. Instead, she hunts for it. Slowly she creeps up on an unsuspecting bug, then leaps, often many times her own body length, onto her next meal. Fangs at the end of her two jaws (iridescent green in the photo) inject a paralyzing poison into the prey. Then the spider injects digestive juices to liquefy the bug's insides. Now the Daring Jumping Spider sucks out her dinner.

Unlike the sight-challenged web-weaving spiders that feel the vibration of entangled prey in their spider silk traps, hunting spiders like this one, have keen eyesight. Of its eight eyes, two are large and face forward providing the spider with binocular vision. This combination of excellent eyesight with their lightning fast movements makes these spiders highly effective hunters.

The Big Chill

by Tim Loftus

I don't believe in reincarnation, although in a past life I did. And if I believe in it in my next life (because I don't in this life), I think I will want to come back as a Daring Jumping Spider. These spiders have got to be the prettiest creatures God has ever created. I could watch them all day long. One time I found a jumping spider running around with a mayfly in its jaws. It looked like a little puppy prancing around with a chew-toy in its mouth. (And I didn't have my camera that day - %\$#!!!)

Since Daring Jumping Spiders move so quickly it is hard to photograph them. For these photographs I chilled her for half an hour in my refrigerator so that she was nice and slow for picture time. Then I placed her on a few grape leaves for contrast. I was able to get about five shots off before she warmed up and ran away.

I never got to say goodbye.

SAVE THE DATES!

AMC's FALL GATHERING 2014

Hosted by the Maine Chapter

Oct 17-19, 2014

Camp Wavus, Damariscotta Lake, Jefferson, Maine

AMC WORCESTER ANNUAL DINNER & MEETING

11/8/2014

3RD WEDNESDAYS POTLUCK & SOCIALS

7/16, 8/20, 9/17, 10/15, 11/19

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL BOARD MEETINGS

9/24, 10/29, 11/26

GET INVOLVED BE A VOLUNTEER

Join the Worcester Chapter Executive Committee

Looking to Give Back or Share the Glory?
Consider joining our dynamic and fun team on
the Worcester Chapter Executive Committee!
We are *The Little Chapter that DOES!*

Openings for the 2015 Executive Committee
include:

- Hiking Chair – Local
- Secretary
- Young (Adult) Members

We're also looking for a "Social Media Guru"
who embraces social media and will get the
word out on all our Chapter happenings.

If interested in learning more about these
positions and how our Chapter thrives,
contact Pat Lambert at
plambert119@yahoo.com.

We're looking for your stories!

If you have a good idea, have something to
say, or just want to share your outdoor
knowledge with others, our quarterly e-
newsletter, *The Wachusett Views* is a good
way to do just that. Please contact editor
Nancy Cahn @
newsletter@amcworchester.org to learn more.

Like to bike?

Do you have suggestions for rides?
Please contact Bicycle Chair Bruce Wester at
westercrew@aol.com.

Worcester Chapter's Volunteer of the Month

George Fardy,

Neil Schutzman, and

Wayne Rogrigues

were named **Volunteer of the Month** for
January, February, and March 2014
respectively.

George was nominated because of his work
on the Pine Hill trail. Neil was nominated for
helping with the Winter Hiking Series and
supporting and encouraging new winter
hikers. Wayne was nominated for helping
with the Leadership training.

Volunteers of the Month are selected in a
random drawing from volunteers nominated
by chapter members. The goal of the
Volunteer of the Month program is to
recognize these volunteers and encourage
volunteerism within the chapter.

Chapter members can nominate volunteers
by sending an e-mail to
davecol550@aol.com. The nomination
should contain the nominee's name, reason
for the recognition, and name of the
nominator. Nominees must be an AMC
member, not a member of the current
Executive Committee, and may serve in any
volunteer capacity that benefits the
Worcester Chapter.



Bay Circuit Trail Volunteer Weekend Work Parties

Get out, get dirty, give back...and get to know the Bay Circuit Trail! Ever wonder what goes into maintaining a trail? Looking for a way to give something back to the local trails you already use? Perhaps you are looking for a way to enjoy the outdoors, learn new skills, and meet like-minded people? We invite you to take part in free work parties on the Bay Circuit, a 240+mile route that stretches from shore to shore around Boston and offers diverse opportunities to explore open space throughout the region.

2014 Dates

July 12 - Boxford-North Andover

August 16 - Walpole

September 27 (National Public Lands Day) - Easton

October 18 - Acton

November 1 - Bridgewater/West Bridgewater

For additional details and to register, go to:

<http://activities.outdoors.org/search/index.cfm/action/details/id/75327>



Join Meetup Group: AMC Worcester

AMC Worcester Chapter posts trips on MeetUp as well as our website <http://www.amcworchester.org/>. Check out our new MeetUp: AMC Worcester and join us on our next trip! <http://www.meetup.com/AMC-Worchester/>

Check us out on Facebook

We're on Facebook – Appalachian Mountain Club – Worcester Chapter. Like our page and connect with others. <https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/88432323469/>

AMC Worcester Chapter Website

Visit our website to find an activity, get the latest news, and meet the chapter's leadership at www.amcworchester.org.

AMC Member Center

Use the Member Center to renew your membership and update your member profile at <http://www.outdoors.org/membership/member-center.cfm>.

Leave No Trace

Partners Come Together to Protect
Cairns in the Northeast



By Ben Lawton, Director of Education for Leave No Trace

Early in 2014, longtime Appalachian Mountain Club volunteer, Pete Lane, contacted the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics about a growing problem found along trails in his home state of New Hampshire – alteration of, and sometimes damage to, cairns. Cairns are intentionally constructed stacks of rocks that mark trails and guide hikers in the mountains above tree line, and in other barren areas. These route markers have been in use in the northeastern U.S. since the 1800's and are very important guides for hikers during periods of low visibility (dense fog and whiteout) and in winter when snow covers the trail. According to Lane, "Cairns in our area are being damaged and as alpine stewards, we need lots of help to get the word out about leaving them as they are."

In order to address the problem, the Center has created a working group to develop and review Leave No Trace information specifically focused on cairns. Many longtime Leave No Trace supporters including the Appalachian Mountain Club, State of Maine, Acadia National Park, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, US Geologic Survey, Green Mountain Club and the Adirondack Mountain Club, all participated in the process, which yielded solid guidance for minimizing the impact on cairns. Education Director for the Center, Ben Lawton, noted that, "whenever possible, we work with partners who can bring specific expertise to the table, allowing the Center to develop robust educational materials to meet specific recreation and resource needs. The development of the cairns guidance greatly benefited from such broad involvement of the northeast trail community." With prime hiking season in the northeast underway, the timing of this guidance is perfect.

Guidelines for minimizing impact on cairns includes:

- 1. Do not build unauthorized cairns.** When visitors create unauthorized routes or cairns they often greatly expand trampling impacts and misdirect visitors from established routes to more fragile or dangerous areas. This is especially important in the winter when trails are hidden by snow. Thus, visitor-created or “bootleg” cairns can be very misleading to hikers and should not be built.
- 2. Do not tamper with cairns.** Authorized cairns are designed and built for specific purposes. Tampering with or altering cairns minimizes their route marking effectiveness. Leave all cairns as they are found.
- 3. Do not add stones to existing cairns.** Cairns are designed to be free draining. Adding stones to cairns chinks the crevices, allowing snow to accumulate. Snow turns to ice, and the subsequent freeze-thaw cycle can reduce the cairn to a rock pile.
- 4. Do not move rocks.** Extracting and moving rocks make mountain soils more prone to erosion in an environment where new soil creation requires thousands of years. It also disturbs adjacent fragile alpine vegetation.
- 5. Stay on trails.** Protect fragile mountain vegetation by following cairns or paint blazes in order to stay on designated trails. ~

Bicycling News



Get Out and Ride Challenge

Send Bruce Wester at westercrew@aol.com your June mileage if you have not already done so. Anyone else interested, there's plenty of time to start the Challenge. Remember it's a personal goal, not a contest or race!

Side notes

Start carrying your AAA card. Southern New England AAA will now help you if your bicycle breaks down and will provide transportation for you and your bike up to 10 miles for no charge.

Take a repair course if you are unsure of your 'fix it' skills. Check your local bike store or REI for a free basic course.

Appalachian Mountain Club Welcomes EPA Plan to Reduce Carbon Pollution from Existing Power Plants

June 2, 2014

The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) applauds today's announcement by the Environmental Protection Agency of a much anticipated plan that will address carbon pollution from America's existing power generating facilities. As the nation's oldest conservation and recreation organization, AMC sees this as an essential step toward curbing greenhouse gas emission impacts, improving air and water quality, and encouraging a robust clean-energy future. Using proven market-based approach of cap-and-trade as one of the core tools to achieve emissions reductions of 30 percent from 2005 levels by 2030, the plan also will foster investments in energy efficiency and clean energy alternatives, AMC representatives said.

"AMC has been studying the impacts of air pollution and climate change in the northern Appalachian mountains for decades. As outdoor recreationists and conservationists, we take air pollution personally, given what it can do to our lungs, our views, and our environment," said AMC Air Quality Scientist Georgia Murray. "We promote outdoor activity to help kids and their families learn about and enjoy the natural world, and we encourage stewardship of our trails, forests, and waters. But dirty air is a barrier to healthy outdoor experiences and it degrades popular outdoor places that attract millions of people each year," she said.

Further, noted Murray, the release of greenhouse gases from fossil fuel combustion threatens the ecological stability of mountain and forested landscapes. She reports that over the past 80 years, the White Mountains of New Hampshire have warmed and snow melt timing is trending about two weeks earlier today in Pinkham Notch than in the 1930s. "While the mountain forests and unique alpine plants of the Northeast summits survived the last natural warming period, with human-caused climate change we are headed into uncharted waters," she said.

The good news, Murray said, is that air quality has improved, thanks to successful Clean Air Act cap-and-trade programs and Northeast states' participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). "Mountain ozone levels have decreased, hazy polluted days have declined, and rain and cloud water are less acidic," she said. "The RGGI program has seen success with reduced CO₂ emissions and increased energy efficiency investments that will pay off far into the future. AMC believes these same proven tools can be used to make much needed additional progress nationally. And the Obama Administration agrees, as the plan announced today offers the successful RGGI model as an option for all states to use to meet carbon reductions requirements." Murray said AMC looks forward to helping finalize strong standards that focus on energy efficiency and conservation.



The Cleanest Energy is the Energy Not Used

Energy dependence is a huge issue. With some of your favorite places to recreate at risk from big energy projects like Northern Pass, it's time to look at why these threats are popping up in the first place. Hint: it has a lot to do with high demand.

AMC's dedication to recreation goes further than caring for your trails, helping you plan your next adventure, and introducing you to new places to explore all over the Northeast. Your club is dedicated to all things outdoors – including protecting your natural playgrounds.

Conservation has been part of our mission from the start and today we're recognized as experts for our independent research and our impactful advocacy. Every time you pay your dues, you support our conservation efforts. The same goes for every kWh you conserve.

AMC has asked members to take a pledge to schedule a home energy audit. If you've already done so, kudos to you! Now, encourage a friend to take the pledge. Think about how your daily energy consumption affects the demand for new energy projects. Consider how you get from place to place and see if you can make less of an impact on air quality.

It's true, many energy projects are greener than in the past, but **the cleanest energy is the energy not used**.

Keep up with AMC's Cleanest Energy campaign by joining the Conservation Action Network today at www.outdoors.org/CAN.

AMC Leader
Stephanie Keimig
Receives Distinguished Service Award



Stephanie Keimig was awarded the Silver Beaver Award, the Boy Scouts of America council-level distinguished service award. Recipients of this award are registered adult leaders who have made an impact on the lives of youth through service given to the council. The Silver Beaver is an award given to those who implement the Scouting program and perform community service through hard work, self-sacrifice, dedication, and many years of service. It is given to those who do not actively seek it. Congratulations and thank you Stephanie!



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The Wachusett Views Editor: Nancy Cahn