



FALL NEWSLETTER 2009

MARION NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

8 SPRING ST., MARION, MA

FALL EVENING PROGRAM:

HOW A MARION CO. IS HELPING TO

STUDY CLIMATE CHANGE & GLOBAL WARMING

BY MARK WHALEN

ENGINEER AT LOCKHEED MARTIN SIPPICAN

Mark Whalen of Lockheed Martin will be giving an engineering presentation that is focused on how people working in Marion are contributing to studies of Climate Change, including Global Warming. The presentation and interactive discussion will focus on the development and manufacturing of Oceanographic and Meteorological Instruments that support scientists who study Global Climate. Sample instruments including oceanographic probes and weather balloons will be passed around. Data from the instruments will be presented for discussion and interpretation. The presentation will include some discussion on the challenges and benefits of an engineering career.

PLEASE ALSO JOIN US FOR:

DEDICATION OF THE MILDRED PICKLES MEMORIAL MARINE AQUARIUM

With the help of local fisheries experts we have installed a new filtration system and a chiller to maintain the proper cold environment for our local aquarium inhabitants. It is now a functioning exhibit of creatures from our harbor.

TIME: 7:00 PM

DATE: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2008

PLACE: NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

8 SPRING ST., MARION, MA

DONATIONS TO HELP SUPPORT THE AQUARIUM WELCOME!

Program for Jr. & Sr. High age students:

Engineering for a Changing Climate

Mark Whalen of Lockheed Marin Sippican will discuss career opportunities in Science and Engineering. The presentation and interactive discussion will focus on what it takes to be an Engineer and the benefits of an engineering education. Examples will be provided on how Engineers are helping solve some of the biggest challenges in today's world, and include a demonstration of how some Lockheed Martin Sippican products are helping scientists study global climate changes. Sample instruments including oceanographic probes and weather balloons will be passed around. The presentation will end with a challenge for the students to become more fully engaged in their education and consider a Science or Engineering career as a way of being able to contribute more to their families, their communities and the planet.

When: October 28 from 5 - 6 pm - free program

Where: Marion Natural History Museum

Natural History Book Club

Fall 2009 Reading Selections

Dear Friend: Whether or not you are able to join us for the discussions of these terrific books, we think you might enjoy reading these titles. For those of you intrigued enough to join the discussion on any of these books, we list below the meeting dates, and welcome you to our lively discussions! With all of the press coverage of food, its availability, its nutritional value and safety, plus its carbon foot print we thought the latter two works would provide interesting background information for understanding the issues we face today.

The Natural History Book Club meets at the Museum, 8 Spring Street, Marion.

Discussions are held on the third Wednesday evening of each month, starting at 7:30 and lasting for about an hour. Light refreshments are provided.

Contact: John or Tess Cederholm – 508-748-2974; cederholm@comcast.net

October 14th we are reading: ***The GRASSES, Earth's Green Wealth***, by Alma Chestnut Moore. Of the more than 500 distinct members of the grass family, part of the more than 200,000 plants that bear seeds, this book focuses on those that provide a large portion of the human food chain. The hybridization of these eight grains made possible the formation of most settled agricultural societies. Each of these grains is covered in a separate chapter of this very readable classic. The chapter entitled 'Some Other Grains' starts with a quote from Shakespeare "...look into the seeds of time and say which grains will grow and which will not."

November 18th we discuss: ***The Forgotten Pollinators*** by Stephen L Bushmann and Gary Paul Nabhan, a research entomologist, and a director of science at the Arizona-Sonoran Museum, in Tucson respectively, the authors travel worldwide, from Staten Island to Australia, delving into the symbiotic dependencies of flowering plants and animals upon which 80% of the human diet relies.

FALL BIRD NOTES

By MARK SYLVIA

By the time the afternoons were becoming perceptibly longer last winter, some birds which had departed the previous fall for southern roosts were already returning and inaugurating the regeneration phase of our annual cycle. Perhaps that month you saw a red-winged blackbird on a wire belting out his territorial screech--conquereeee!, or heard the eerie wing-whirring of woodcock displaying while you took a walk in the twilight. So forgive February its stinging snows, when the important news is the beginning of the spring migration.

If you're not tuned in to the avian world, you might not sense vernal stirrings until that first good thaw in March, when crocuses and daffodils make their entrances, or robins pulling worms from the squishy lawn. Learn some of the bird species which frequent our area, and you find the weeks from Ground Hog Day to lilac time marked by new arrivals, dribbling in at first, then coming at a crushing pace by the first of May. Many of the birds who arrive here in the spring are here to stay for the summer, launch a new family or two or three, and decamp, young and all, for the winter grounds.

There is a general asymmetry that can lead to some rather striking scenes when the fall migration is under way. Whereas most of the northward migrating birds which you will see are apt to be individuals working their way at their own pace, autumn can be a time to witness great flocks of birds of a feather. Tree swallows by the thousands stage at the southern end of land masses awaiting favorable winds before launching themselves into a journey over the ocean. Gooseberry Neck and Cuttyhunk are just two such places.

The logic of the tree swallows in holding out for northerly winds is beyond reproach. There seems to be more at work, though. Even a normally gregarious bird like the common grackle, which is often found in small to medium sized groups in the spring and summer, will, in the fall, aggregate into flying rivers of tens of thousands of individuals. Their group may become a mixed flock which includes other species of blackbirds. Migratory birds which overwinter here can become flockers. Spring and summer robins appear mostly as solitaires or in small groups at best, but those which are here in the dead of winter are seen on Audubon Christmas Counts by the hundreds, thousands, and multiple thousands.

Fall migration began almost literally when the last spring arrival landed--late in June. You can probably bid adieu to your hummingbirds mid-September, to the terns early October, and various blackbirds in November, but some things you just can never be sure about. The occasional Baltimore oriole, catbird, and towhee will just not get around to leaving, though most of his peers go south. These so-called stragglers will keep company with the scores of resident species; well stocked feeders will be a focal point for them and the persons watching.

STARLAB: The Starlab, our traveling Portable Planetarium, has become a very popular exhibit, well used this past school year, both by the local schools and other youth groups. We have an experienced Starlab instructor, Heather Hanby, who is uniquely qualified to provide high quality programming. Heather has been working with the school systems to design our programs so that they meet science standards helping the public school systems cover MCAS and curriculum-related requirements in science and astronomy. Sample programs she offers:

Where in the Solar System are We?
Moon Madness
The Reasons for Seasons
Star Stories

It's all Greek to ME!!! (myths)
Woodland Native American Star Tales
Tonight's Sky
Or – Create Your Own!

For more Information, please consult our website: marionmuseum.org
Or contact our Director, Elizabeth Leidhold: lizeleid@msn.com; 508-758-9089

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

The Marion Natural History Museum would like to restart their **LEGO/ROBOTICS CLUBS** and we need a few reliable volunteers to help the kids. If your son or daughter has an interest in legos or lego robotics and you'd like to lend us a hand in getting a club started on Saturday mornings, please email the museum at Lizeleid@msn.com or call the museum at 508-748-2098. Thank you!

Marion Natural History Museum
P.O. Box 644
Marion, MA 02738

MARION NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
FALL SCHEDULE OF AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS
2009

WEDNESDAY AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

September 30 - PLANTING SHELLFISH with Marion Shellfish Officer Isaac Perry. Let's learn what the water off Island Wharf has that is similar to Stellwagon Bank. How can we help shellfish in Buzzards Bay? This is a hands-on activity.

October 7 - LOOK WHAT THE TIDE DRAGGED IN! Head to the beach and stroll along the wrack line to see what came in on the previous high tide. Learn the identification and natural history of commonly found shells and seaweeds.

October 14 - ROCKETS FOR BIGGER KIDS. Each child will have his/her own rocket with motor to assemble and set off. Cost for this program is \$20.00/participant. Hours for this program are from 3:30 to 5:00 pm. Sorry, program is limited to ages 6 and up and only 12 will be accepted, first come-first served.

***Note: Each child will take home his own assembled rocket with motor.

October 21st - THE MYSTERY OF SHELLS! Let's learn some basic shell identification techniques and collection practices by investigating the museum's Doane shell collection. Please bring your own shell collection if you have one to share.

November 4 - T-REX IS AWESOME, I wish I had one! Come learn about fossils and fossil hunting. Amateur Paleontologist Jim Pierson will help us explore this unique world and learn how to start looking for your own T-Rex. Jim will also be bringing in examples of his own collection of rocks, minerals, and fossils from around the world to examine. We will also be looking at the museum's extensive collection

November 18 - IS IT A BIRD? A PLANE? No, it's Astronomy Teacher at Tabor Academy, David Pierce, who will be showing us how to operate that very complicated telescope at the museum you've all been wondering about. You may also bring your own telescope if you have one. Let's learn about how to view distant objects through the lens.

December 16 - MUSEUM'S ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY will include crafts to be built and snacks for the kids to enjoy.

***Note: Party is Free and open to everyone.

WHERE: All of the above programs will be held at the Museum,
located above the Elizabeth Taber Library, 7 Spring Street, Marion, Mass.

WHEN: Wednesday afternoons from 3:30 to 4:30 pm.

COST: is \$4.00 for members, \$6.00 for nonmembers.

Please sign my child up for the following programs:

_____ Planting Shellfish _____ What the Tide Brought In _____ Rockets ***\$20

_____ Shell Collecting _____ T-Rex _____ Telescopes _____ Holiday Party - free
Programs are \$4.00 for members, \$6.00 for nonmembers.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Museum Membership: Family Member _____ Nonmember _____

I give permission to have the Museum's Director, Elizabeth Leidhold, retrieve my child
_____ from Sippican School and walk him/her to the museum.
I understand that the program ends at 4:30 pm and I will pick up my child at that time.

Name of parent or guardian



PLEASE HELP US & BECOME A MEMBER!

The Marion Natural History Society is a 501-C-3 non-profit organization, dependent upon the goodwill and donations of its members for its financial survival.

We need your help to continue our growth and expansion of programs.

Please, also consider a generous gift to enable the Marion Natural History Museum to keep our important community activities afloat, to empower us to expand them, and to be at the forefront of children's science activity, and relevant, timely adult programs.

We thank you for your Tax Deductible Donation.

DUES: MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

- Family \$ 60 _____
- Contributing \$ 100 _____
- Sustaining \$ 250 _____
- Sponsor or Corporate \$ 500 _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE _____ EMAIL _____

