



Citizens for Lexington Conservation

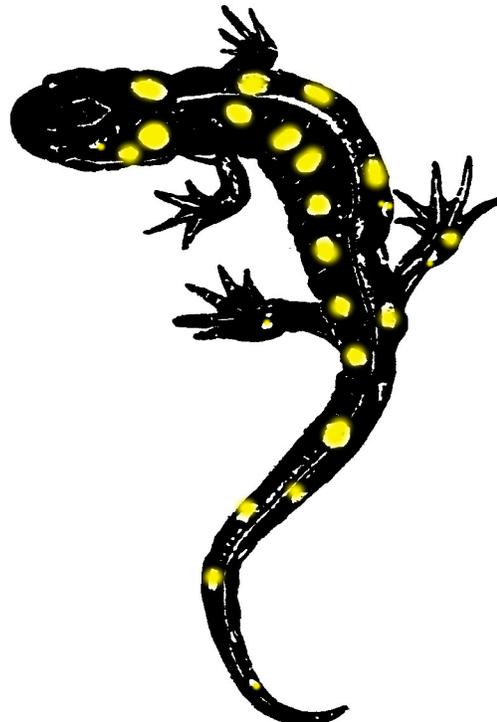
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Kate Fricker, Editor **April, 2005** **Eileen Entin, President**

IN THIS ISSUE	Page
CLC Publications	2
CLC Spring Walks	3
Invasive Plants in Your Backyard	4
The Lexington Stewardship Program	5
Environmental Issues at the Luongo Farm	6
Lot 1 Update	6
The High School Envirothon Team	8
Review of <i>Boiling Point</i> , by Gelbspan	8
Review of <i>State of Fear</i> , by Crichton	9
Review of <i>The Trees in My Forest</i>	9
Traffic Calming	9
Web Sites	11
Squandering of Public Land for Private Profit	12
Sale to Benefit Middlesex Conservation	12
More <i>Lexington Reads</i> Events	13
April is EARTH MONTH	13
Answers to Photo Quizzes	14
Thank You, Fall Walk Leaders	14



Spotted Salamander

Printed on Recycled Paper



Citizens for Lexington Conservation is a non-profit organization that relies on dues paid by members to cover its expenses. Look at your mailing label to check your membership status. If it says "Dues paid 2005," you are up to date. If it says "Dues paid 2004" (or earlier), then it is time to renew your membership for 2005. If it says "Complimentary Copy," you are receiving a complimentary copy of our newsletter because you are a Town Meeting member or other public official in Lexington. We hope that those who receive complimentary copies will find our organization of value and will become dues-paying members. To join CLC or renew your membership, please send \$7.00 for a regular membership or \$10.00 for a sustaining membership to CLC, P.O. Box 292, Lexington, MA 02420-0003.

There is an electronic version of the CLC newsletter, sent as an attachment on an e-mail. This version of the newsletter has illustrations in color, it arrives much sooner than the snail mail version, it saves paper, and it costs CLC about \$1 less per copy. If you would like your newsletter by e-mail, contact Kate Fricker at kfricker@alum.swarthmore.edu.

CLC PUBLICATIONS

Over the years CLC has encouraged members to write guides to the open spaces in Lexington. These guides have now been scanned and are available at no charge on our web site, <http://www.lexingtonma.org/clc/HomePage.htm>. You may also use the web site to contact us about conservation-related happenings or sightings of unusual birds and wildlife that we can use on our web site and in our newsletter.

The files are saved as Adobe Acrobat .pdf files, and require the free Acrobat Reader. You can obtain this reader at <http://adobe.com/prodindex/acrobat/readstep.html>.

Available titles are:

A Wildflower Walk at Whipple Hill
A Walk Through Hayden Woods
Birds of Dunback Meadow
Birds of the Great Meadow
Birds of Whipple Hill
Building a Brushpile
Checklist of Lexington Birds
Discovering the Paint Mine
Ferns of Whipple Hill
Flowers and Shrubs of Whipple Hill, 1982
Flowers and Shrubs of Whipple Hill, 2000
Geological History of Lexington
Guide to the Great Meadows: A Walking Tour
Gypsy Moth
Insect Pests of Shade Trees
Introduction to Hayden Woods
The Red Fox in Lexington
Wildflower List for Lexington
Winter Feeder Checklist



Citizens for Lexington Conservation: Spring Walks, 2005

Lincoln Park Garlic-Mustard --- Annual Service Walk

Sunday, May 1st, 2 – 4

Come learn to identify this common yard-invasive pest and why it's so important to combat it. Spend an hour or so helping carry on our campaign to eliminate garlic-mustard from this heavily used recreation/conservation area. Meet at the Worthen Road end of the bike path through Lincoln Park. Bring a plastic yard trash bag and a pair of gardening gloves with you.

Leader: Nell Walker (781-862-6943)

Whipple Hill and Locke Pond

Thursday, May 12th, 2 to 4 :30

Join naturalist Boot Boutwell for a walk over these two areas that join across the Lexington-Winchester border to look for spring wildflowers and other signs of spring. Boot particularly welcomes school-age children and their parents to his nature walks -- They're fun and informative for all! The entrance to the area is on Winchester Drive immediately east of Russell Road. If the tiny parking lot at the entrance is full, park on Berkshire Drive, the side street opposite.

Leader: Boot Boutwell (781-729-4712)

Lot 1 Exploration

Sunday, May 15th, 2 to 4:00

Explore the many important features of this pristine section of the former Middlesex County Hospital property, including mature upland forest, vernal pools, wildflowers, and the remains of one of the oldest roads to Lexington dating from the 1660's . Meet at the Brookhaven employee parking lot. Brookhaven is at 1010 Waltham Street. Bear right on the property entrance road; the lot is the first on your right. Long sleeves and pants are recommended to deter ticks.

Leader: Keith Ohmart (781-862-6216)

Big Backyard at Estabrook

Saturday, May 21st, 2 to 3:30

Fran Ludwig will lead us through the Paint Mine conservation area, the Big Backyard of Estabrook School. Learn about and enjoy the spring changes in the woods and on the trail, while sampling the seasonal walks that Lexington schoolchildren take as they study natural science. Meet in the Estabrook School parking lot, 117 Grove Street.

Leader: Fran Ludwig (781-861-7231)

Meadow Butterflies

Sunday, June 19th, 2 to 4:00

At Dunback Meadow, Tom Whelan will help us spot and begin to identify the butterflies that are seasonal in our region. Meet at the entrance to the conservation area near the corner of Allen Street and Pitcairn Place. Allen Street is off Waltham Street. Please check the CLC website, <http://www.lexingtonma.org/clc/HomePage.htm>, to confirm the date and time of this walk.

Leader : Tom Whelan (781-863-1880)

For further information on all walks, contact Maryanne King (781-860-0229).



Invasive Plants in Your Backyard

By Nell Walker

There are many non-native fruiting plants that we have planted for ornamental interest. Most are good, but there are a few bad guys running rampant, such as Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), Burningbush (*Euonymus alatus*), Multiflora Rose, Bush-Honeysuckles (*Lonicera* sp.) and Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*). They are bad because we now are experiencing a massive assault on our native habitats, with an explosion in the number of plants originally brought from abroad as garden ornamentals or as erosion control. They are leaping the fence and are now termed exotic invasive species. These plants are not mere weeds. They are exquisitely adapted to muscling out our native species, reducing biodiversity. And they are very costly to remove when they have taken over an ecosystem. It is ironic that birds play a leading role in the spread of these exotics, by eating the fruit, flying to a tree deep in the forest or YOUR yard, and depositing the seed with a little fertilizer. Many nurseries compound the problem by still selling some of the worst of the invasives. Even Weston Nurseries, one of the most responsible, sells Burningbush and Japanese barberry, as listed in their 2005 catalog.

With the arrival of Spring and the urge to dig and plant in our suburban yards, it is important for gardeners to recognize some of the bad guys, and ask - what can be put in their place? The list below of suggested native alternatives is just a start toward responsible gardening:

INVASIVE PERENNIAL

Garlic Mustard (*Allaria petiolata*)
Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)

Shrub-like Bamboo-Knotweeds
(*Polygonum cuspidatum*)

INVASIVE SHRUB

Buckthorns (*Rhamnus cathartica*)

Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*)

Burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*)

INVASIVE TREE

Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*)
Tuliptree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)

NATIVE ALTERNATIVE

American ginger (*Asarum canadense*)
Joe-pye Weed (*Eupatorium* sp.),
Red Osier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*)
Beebalm (*Monarda didyma*)
Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea* sp.)
Shrubby dogwoods such as *Cornus sericea*
Milkweed (*Asclepias purpureascens*)
Rose mallow (*Hibiscus moscheutos*)

NATIVE ALTERNATIVE

Shadbush, Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*)
Pagoda Dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*)
C. sericea, *C. Amomum*
Viburnum, sp.
Bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*)
Virginia Sweetspire, Highbush Blueberry
Summersweet (*Clethra alnifolia*)
Chokeberry (*Aronia* sp.), Fothergilla,
Bayberry, Highbush Blueberry

NATIVE ALTERNATIVE

Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)

Sugar Maple (*A. saccharum*)
Yellowwood (*Cladrastis kentukea*)

A number of projects are underway in Lexington to control invasives, such as the High School stewardship program in Lincoln Park, and the program where freshman earn credit hours by learning to i.d. and remove invasives such as Garlic Mustard, Bittersweet and Honeysuckle along the Minuteman Bikeway and in other public lands. The Town of Lexington Tree

Committee's Tree Management Manual (<http://ci.lexington.ma.us/>) lists three invasive trees not to be planted as street trees. CLC has invasives control days (Garlic mustard) in spring. Diamond Jr. High has an experiment on Purple loosestrife control in the adjacent Willard Woods wetlands, and Babara Kent has taken on the restoration of the Vinebrook Meadow off of East Street.



Toads Laying Eggs

Here a prescribed burn, removal of Buckthorn and replacements with native grass and wild flower plants has been in process since 2001; Lincoln Park, a highly disturbed area (the former dump), is a text book of invasive species. Much of the effort spent on control of plant invasives and their replacement is made possible by volunteers. Money for native plants is provided by a special trust fund.

What is needed is a coordinated program of invasives control town-wide, so that piecemeal good-hearted efforts are not nullified by the quick reclaiming of cleared areas by new invasives

ready to leapfrog into the void. Look in your backyard and remove that grove of Norway maples saplings that have colonized the property lines or the Garlic mustard that has staked claim to a hidden corner or the Burning Bush that appeared suddenly under the branch of a tree. Then plant an appropriate native, perhaps one from the list above.

We can reclaim our land, but it has to be done backyard by backyard. 🌲

The Lexington Stewardship Program

By Keith Ohmart

The winter months have seen a flurry of activity by the newly organized Steward Directors Committee. The Steward Newsletter, under the able editing and artistic direction of Sara Iverson, is sporting an entirely new look. To view a copy of the most recent edition, visit the Steward web site at <http://www.lexingtonma.org/conservation/stewardship.html>.

A working copy of an entirely new Stewardship Handbook was released at the Spring Steward's meeting held on March 21. This handbook is the result of a collaborative effort by several of the Steward Directors under the editorial guidance of Mike Tabaczynski. Further refinements will be made over the summer, with a more complete edition to be released this fall. You can view a copy of this handbook by visiting the CLC web site, <http://www.lexingtonma.org/clc/HomePage.htm>.

Another subcommittee undertook the task of increasing the effectiveness of the Lexington High School student environmental stewardship program. This subcommittee met with representatives from the high school to develop better ways to coordinate the students who are interested in fulfilling their volunteer hours requirement by participating in land conservation activities. For more information on this topic, view or download the latest Steward newsletter on the Steward web site.

Looking ahead, the next major project on the Steward Directors' agenda will be developing a Comprehensive Land Management Plan format. The long-term goal is to develop a Land Management Plan for each of the town's conservation properties.

In the shorter term, several workdays are being planned for the coming season to construct a total of 1300 feet of boardwalk at Dunback Meadow. The first of these workdays is scheduled for May 7 (see the CLC Spring Walk Schedule elsewhere in this newsletter for details). CLC members are invited to attend the first annual Stewards Picnic, scheduled for 12 noon, June 4 at the North Street entrance to Willards Woods.🌲

Environmental Issues at the Luongo Farm

By Steve Kropper

Do you know the Luongo Farm development? From Mass. Ave, go south on Pleasant Street, pass Wilson Farm and turn into the access road gouged at 47-53 Pleasant Street. Town zoning intended just two homes on the limited frontage. However, seven homes are planned on postage stamp sized lots under a plan recently approved by the town.

The site's Luongo Farm is gone, but it is an illustration of how a determined developer bulldozed all the hurdles the town threw up: historical preservation, traffic mitigation, highway safety, affordable housing and wetland preservation. In anguished meetings, the Planning Board, Historical Commission and Conservation Commission could not stop or shape a development that trampled on so many town goals. Here are the key objections:

- There is frontage enough for just two homes on Pleasant Street. But squeeze an access road through the center of the lot and you can pack in seven homes! It is easy to evade the Town's frontage and density goals.
- The average home around Pleasant Street is under 1,700 square feet. But the proposed buildings are 4200 s.f. – 2 ½ times larger! The developer would not compromise an inch in height, area or mass. Lexington's mansions are treasures, but zoning regulations did not anticipate such huge homes on small plots.
- Highway engineers are not known as environmentalists. But they are concerned with safety. The Luongo Farm development violates AASHTO "line of sight" rules. Rules say that a street is OK if motorists can see traffic for 350' in BOTH directions. Pleasant Street is hilly, and the development is on the inside of the "S" curve. Line of sight is under 250'!
- The developer demolished two houses on the site, one built in 1881 during Garfield's presidency. This took housing for three affordable housing tenants off the market. One was an elderly handicapped man who paid rent there for 35 years. Lexington's historical and affordable housing goals were trampled.

Town boards need help. They need stronger regulatory tools to deal with hit-and-run developers with no inclination to balance the Town's welfare with their own.🌲

Lot 1 Update

By Keith Ohmart

As many of you may be now be aware, Lot 1 of the former Middlesex County Hospital property, is under threat of public auction by the Commonwealth. This 54 acre (47.5 acres in Lexington, the balance in Waltham) parcel of undeveloped open space consists primarily of an intact ecosystem of mature upland forest and vernal pools that when combined with adjacent Town-owned land, would total some 80 acres in extent. Lot 1 is presently owned by the state which

through its Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM), is threatens to auction some or all of the property for residential development on or before June 30 of this year.

A wide coalition of local citizen advocacy groups from Lexington and our neighboring communities of Belmont and Waltham, in conjunction with Massachusetts Audubon, have been working with our local elected officials and state legislative representatives to preserve this environmentally important property. On the legislative front, efforts led by Representatives Tom Stanley, Jay Kaufman and Senator Susan Fargo have been focused on repealing and replacing the present enabling legislation, Outside Section 548, which is allowing DCAM to auction state owned properties under the present fast-track auctioning process enacted in 2003 with the passage of the FY2004 state budget.

On the local front, Representative Stanley coordinated a meeting in House Speaker DiMasi's office in late February attended by Representative Kaufman, Senator Fargo, representatives of DCAM, and local elected officials from Lexington and Waltham to discuss both the future of Lot 1 specifically and the state land disposition process. As of this writing, those who attended that meeting are waiting for an official response from DCAM on the issues discussed.

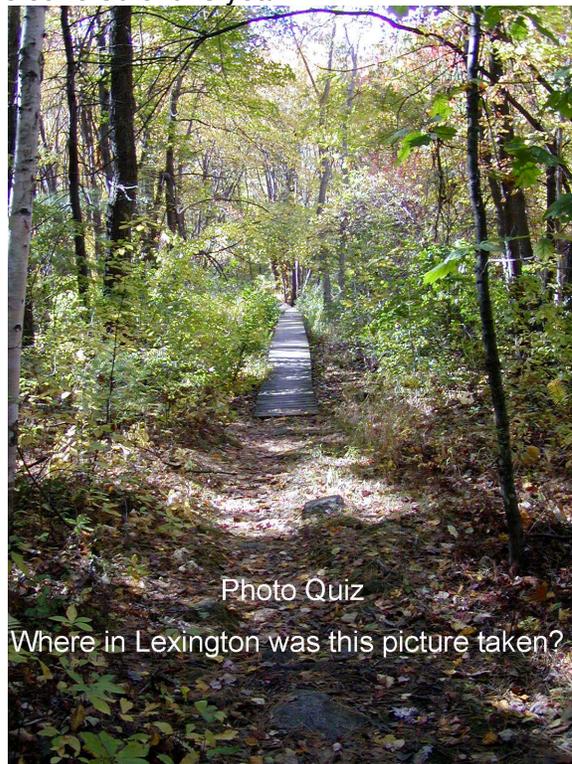


Photo Quiz

Where in Lexington was this picture taken?

Also on the local front, Lexington Town Meeting, at its first session on March 28 unanimously approved a resolution placing the Town on record as strongly favoring the preservation of Lot 1 as open space, and requesting that the Board of Selectman convey the spirit of this resolution to state government officials.

Efforts have also been made to request that the State Department of Conservation and Recreation take steps to acquire Lot 1 as conservation land, but it is uncertain at this point if such steps will be taken. Also unclear at this point is when and if DCAM will conduct one or more public meetings in Lexington as part of the planning process for this property, details of which were discussed during the late February meeting in Speaker DiMasi's office.

Unfortunately, despite all of these efforts, the issue lies with DCAM, which continues to make clear its intentions to auction all or a portion of Lot 1 before its legislative mandate under OS548 expires on June 30. Please visit the CLC web site periodically where updates will be posted regarding this issue. Please also watch the local paper for notices of any public meetings regarding this issue. It will be extremely important that any such meetings be well attended so that the opinions of the local community can be expressed on this issue. CLC will also send out e-mail bulletins of any important developments. If you are not part of CLC's e-mail listing and would like to be added to this list, please contact Kate Fricker at kfricker@alum.swarthmore.edu.

If you would like to take a walking tour of Lot 1, CLC will be offering a guided walk of the property on May 15 (see the CLC Spring Walk schedule elsewhere in this newsletter for details).

The High School Envirothon Team

By Anna Goldie

Currently, the Lexington Envirothon team is focusing on a few different areas around the high school. This year the main focus of the team is to create a more suitable habitat for birds and butterflies in a drainage basin "wetland" adjacent to the science building. We are growing native vegetation (examples Joe Pye Weed, Little Blue Stem, Milkweed, Purple Cone Flowers, etc.) and intend to plant select areas during the months of May and June. This project spans several years.

Our plan to rehabilitate this marshy area involves the eradication of the invasive species Purple Loosestrife, Glossy Buckthorn, and Multiflora Rose. In the fall, we worked alongside teams of freshman volunteers armed with shovels, clippers, and garbage bags. Before digging up the thick roots of the Purple Loosestrife, volunteers carefully removed seed heads and bagged them. Cleared areas will be planted in the spring. 🌲

***Boiling Point*, by Ross Gelbspan**

Reviewed by Stew Kennedy and Deb Mauger

The subtitle of *Boiling Point*, Ross Gelbspan's newest (2004) book on global warming, signals his urgent argument: "How Politicians, Big Oil and Coal, Journalists, and Activists Are Fueling the Climate Crisis—and What We Can Do to Avert Disaster". Gelbspan is a journalist—a newspaper reporter and editor—and he has written here a well-researched, very readable, and compelling case for the need for major changes in worldwide energy policies. He challenges us to be visionary in seeking a solution before we miss the chance.



Beech Leaves Unfolding

After explaining the problem—that humanity must quickly reduce use of carbon fuels (and thus cut generation of carbon dioxide) by 70%—Gelbspan, chapter by chapter, shows the parts being played by the fossil fuel lobby (Criminals Against Humanity is that chapter's title), politicians who listen to them, press and broadcast journalists whom he blames for the American public's being so ill-informed, and environmental activists who are not thinking big enough in reaching for solutions. Fortunately, he concludes with a visionary strategy for a renewable energy economy that he argues can solve the problem while raising standards of living even in the developed world.

Gelbspan says climate change is not just another important issue but is "the issue that, unchecked, will swamp all other issues." Set aside a couple of hours to read this important little book. Then expect to spend a good long while contemplating the warning and what we must do about it. As Bill McKibben says on the book cover: "[Gelbspan] manages to get across just how desperate our situation is. Please read this book." 🌲

State of Fear, by Michael Crichton

Reviewed by Nancy Nolan

I thought I could write something about "a good summer book with an interest in the environment" but this book is so bad that I can't write anything good about it. Crichton has an anti-environment attitude throughout the book and the actors are so ridiculous (why do all the women have to look like a Hollywood actress?) that I can't recommend it to anyone. I know members of CLC would not enjoy it. 🌲

The Trees in My Forest, by Bernd Heinrich

Reviewed by Keith Ohmart

If you wish to read one book on the subject of trees, make it this one. Noted author and educator Bernd Heinrich has written many wonderful books for general readers over the years on a wide array of natural history topics ranging from birds to seasons of the year to insects. What he brings to each topic discussed is an unerring ability to communicate profound scientific observations in lay language that conveys to the casual reader an intimate and memorable appreciation and understanding of the natural world around us.

The Trees in My Forest is no exception and makes for a wonderful read. Heinrich's command of his subject matter is both detailed and sweeping. One minute you are delving deeply into minute field observations under Heinrich's guidance while a few pages later this information leads the reader to a broader scale consideration of the biological economies of forests in general.

The lives of trees and forests in general comes alive through Heinrich's artful prose. I can guarantee that you will never look at the trees in your back yard, or



New Spring Growth on Spruce Tree

forests in general, quite the same way again after reading this book. 🌲

Traffic Calming

by Erna Greene

Why calm traffic? We have been hearing about calming traffic from a number of sources. First transportation planners, and now residents of our neighborhoods who find themselves cobwebbed by networks of roads that divide into unfriendly segments, are asking for more livable communities where it is safe for young people to cross roads to play with their counterparts across the way. When I was a kid we even played on the streets, as the sight of a vehicle was a rarity—mostly delivery trucks and of course the summer afternoon ding-a-linging ice cream vendor. The reason so many people are interested in traffic calming is the quantity and quality of the ever-so-many vehicles that whiz past our houses, making neighborhood play and even sleep difficult.

Recently the Belmont Citizens Forum and several local organizations invited the regional (and national) expert on traffic calming to tell how traffic calming is being accomplished in Cambridge. Cara Seiderman, the Transportation Program Manager for the City of Cambridge and member of the Massachusetts Governor's Highway Design Manual Task Force, told of the various ways to calm vehicle traffic especially on residential streets. Here are the major ways the Cambridge's Community Development Environmental and Transportation Planning Traffic Calming Program recommends in a beautifully illustrated folder:

- At intersections curbs can be extended outward. This will shorten pedestrian crossings, improve visibility for pedestrians and drivers and prevent parking close to corners. Most importantly, turning vehicles would be forced to slow down when turning.
- Crosswalks can be raised. An example of this is the yellow hump between the Bridge Elementary School and the walking path to Lincoln Park and the Baskin Road neighborhood. Cars slow down for this hump that makes crossing for walkers, cyclists, wheelchairs and strollers easier.
- Intersections can be raised. This is a larger version of the vertical variation that includes the entire intersection area, reducing potential conflict by slowing the vehicles.
- Chicanes (barriers) can be created by widening sidewalks and the areas between sidewalk and curb, or by requiring parking on alternate sides. Vehicles have to slow down by having to follow a curvy route instead of a straightaway. Interesting landscaping can further enhance these bump-outs.
- Crossing islands, especially at important road crossings near schools and parks, allow pedestrians a safe haven between different vehicular travel directions.

To obtain a copy of the brochure by mail, call the Cambridge Community Development's Environmental and Transportation Planning office at 617-349-4604 or download the brochure on your computer at the website, www.cambridgema.gov/cdd/et/tc/tcb.pdf (Especially good if you have a color printer).

In addition to the aforementioned projects, roundabouts can also be created to control traffic speed without aid of traffic lights and electricity. Now that Massachusetts motorists have finally learned from the British that the vehicle in the rotary has the clear right-of-way, vehicle protocol is established. It is even possible for pedestrians and bicycles to maneuver in these areas. Small roundabouts can be affordable even by local governments on limited budgets. Small circular islands inserted in an intersection slow vehicles passing through and simplify safety at the limited points of potential conflict. Landscaping the nearby roundabout could provide a rare gem of neighborhood pride.



Photo Quiz

Where in Lexington was this picture taken?

Let's concentrate on what is doable: An example of traffic calming that the Bicycle Advisory Committee and Lexington Friends

of the Bikesay are attempting to accomplish is the striping by painting the four-lane high speed section of Hartwell Avenue to only three lanes. The center lane of the road between the



Interrupted Fern - Fiddleheads

Minuteman Bicycle Path and Hanscom Air Base/Field would be reserved for vehicles turning left into one of the many entrances to commercial establishments, and the space of the former fourth lane would be reserved for safe use by cyclists and walkers. Many people using these environmentally-friendly means of transportation can now be seen competing with vehicles at lunch or commuting times. Unfortunately, accomplishing this low-budget traffic-calming device has been slowed by change of personnel in the DPW's engineering staff and scarcity of money.

In short, traffic calming is a way to cut down on vehicle speed and increase safety for all with no reduction in overall volume capacity. 🌲

Web Sites with Interesting Walks and Events in Our Area

- Information about Biodiversity Days, June 4-12, 2005, sponsored by the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions is posted on <http://www.maccweb.org/wildthings/biodiversity.htm>
- Animal Tracking Slide Show at Bedford Free Library, Thursday, April 28 at 7pm, sponsored by Bedford Conservation Commission Trails Committee.
- Walks sponsored by Bedford Conservation Commission: <http://home.comcast.net/~trails Bedford/2005Schedule.htm>
- Conservation links on the web site of the Bedford Conservation Land Stewards: <http://nemow.net/stwlinks.html>
- Drumlin Farms: http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/catalog.php
- Habitat: http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/Sanctuaries/Habitat/catalog.php
- Waltham Land Trust: <http://www.walthamlandtrust.org/calendar.html>
- Bedford Conservation Land Stewards: <http://nemow.net/BedfordStewards.html>
- Menotomy Bird Club: <http://mrines.com/menotomy/Trips.htm>
- Shawsheen River Watershed Association: <http://www.shawsheen.org/>
- Friends of Arlington's Great Meadow: <http://www.foagm.org/#Upcoming%20Events>
- Belmont Citizens Forum: www.belmontcitizensforum.org
- The Arlington Reservoir Committee, and the rebuilding of the dam, near the Lexington border and Busa Farm: www.arlington2020.org/reservoir/

Squandering of Public Lands for Private Profit

By Jill Stein

The extension of the fast track auction law has been prevented—so far, but a new variation of the plan has emerged, and while the details are not yet available, the broad outlines are very worrisome. The new measure, sponsored by House Speaker DiMasi, promises to provide surplus state lands (for the bargain-basement price of a lease), infrastructure, tax breaks, and freedom from permitting requirements (ie, from local control) to large corporations—all at taxpayer expense. For more on the DiMasi plan see <http://masschc.org/story.php?id=182>. Cochair of the Committee of Economic Development, Representative Dan Bosley, commented that this new plan is better than "just throwing money at businesses. This anchors businesses by GIVING THEM LAND." [Emphasis added]

You can help stop the squandering of public lands for private profits by asking your local neighborhood, housing or environmental organization to sign the petition to "Save Public Land for the Public Good" at <http://masschc.org/petitionmaster.html>. The petition calls for stopping the auctions AND for an open democratic process for legislating policy on public lands. This would help stop the use of the "outside section" process to avoid hearings, public input and recorded votes. Bringing the debate on public land use out of Beacon Hill backrooms into the light of day is essential if we are to stop the misuse of irreplaceable, invaluable public resources.

On a hopeful note, many advocates for sustainable, just communities came from all over the Commonwealth for the "Taking Back Our Future!" workshop. The gathering of public interest proponents from across the urban, suburban, rural divide, and across the spectrum of issues—agriculture, affordable housing, environment, neighborhood associations and "good government"—was inspirational. For a report on the workshop, click here: <http://masschc.org/story.php?id=181>. 🌲



Sale to benefit Middlesex Conservation District's Conservation Programs

The Middlesex Conservation District, a nonprofit environmental agency, will be holding a cash sale of perennials, tree and shrub seedlings, herbs, fruits, groundcovers and hardgoods (composted cow manure, compost bins, etc.) Friday, April 22 (3-6PM) and Saturday, April 23 (8AM - 12 noon). The sale will take place at the 4H Fairgrounds, South Chelmsford Rd., Westford, MA. All proceeds benefit the MCD's conservation programs. The Herb Farmacy will also be there on April 23 with a selection of organically

grown herbs, and to speak about growing and preserving your herbal harvest. 🌲

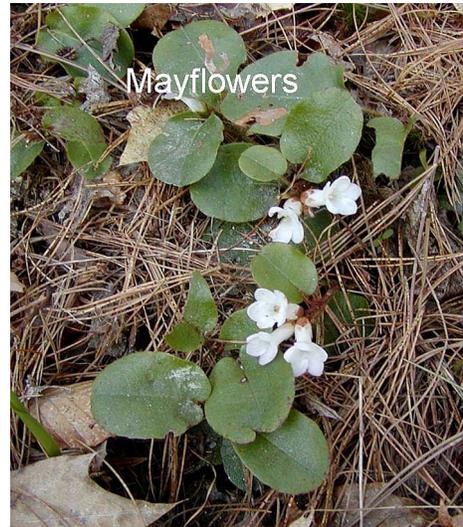
More LEXINGTON READS Events

By Keith Ohmart

The calendar for this year's Lexington Reads program will close out with three remaining activities between mid April and early May. The first event will feature a lecture by noted author, environmentalist and native son, Bill McKibben, who will speak on the topic, "From Global to Local: Signs of Hope in a Strained World." This event will take place at the Hancock Church at 7:30 pm on April 16.

The next event will be a planning meeting for next year's Lexington Reads program to be hosted by the Trustees of Cary Library at 7:30 pm, April 26 at the Cary Library Meeting Room. Next year's book selection will be made at this meeting and a committee appointed to manage next year's program. Those interested in proposing a title for next year's program or in participating in the selection process should be sure to attend this meeting.

The final event on this year's calendar will consist of a half day workshop devoted to identifying a range of environmental actions that Lexington citizens might undertake that would further the goals outlined in, *The Future of Life*. This event will take place on May 7 from 9 am to 12 noon at Cary Hall and is open to all interested citizens regardless of whether they have read this year's featured book. 🌲



April is EARTH MONTH in the Elementary Schools

By Fran Ludwig

The K-5 Lexington Reads committee has been working hard to provide elementary children with opportunities to help the Earth. Here is what is happening:

1. To focus our school communities on paper waste and its effect on the environment, we are posting two displays a few weeks apart:

March 21-April 2: How is Paper Made? Paper is made from trees or from other paper. The process involves breaking the wood or paper down into small bits. Can you tell the difference between paper made from trees and paper made from paper? Look with a magnifier!!

April 4-15: Be a Friend to Trees: Save Paper! In your school, 90% of the trash is paper. All of the school paper is made from trees (Recycled paper is more costly). You can save trees by reducing paper use, reusing paper, and recycling paper. Can you find the symbols to show whether paper is recycled or not? How many trees does it take to make YOUR school's yearly supply of paper?

2. We are in the final stages of scheduling the assembly presentations of Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax* in celebration of Earth Month. So far, here is our schedule:

Wed. April 13, 9 AM Estabrook

Thurs. April 14, 9 AM Fiske, 11:30 AM Bowman

Friday April 15, 9 AM Hastings
Thurs. April 28, 11 AM Bridge

By the time *The Lorax* is presented at these schools and the question is asked, "Who speaks for the trees?" the kids should be able to say that THEY do!! You are welcome to attend a performance. Please check in as a visitor at the school office first.

SPECIAL REQUEST OF CLC NEWSLETTER READERS: We would like to present each class with a small seedling of a native tree at the end of the Lorax presentation. Hopefully students can nurture them until they can be re-planted in a place that needs a tree. Soon—(believe it or not) sugar and red maple seedlings will be sprouting under almost every mother tree in town. White pine seedlings are already available. Could you pot up some small seedlings to contribute to the school trees project? We would like to replace some that we use for paper. Contact Fran Ludwig if you can help before April 10: ludwig@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us or call 781-861-2584.

3. Students will read about the Earth and its rich variety of living things (biodiversity!!) for EARTH MONTH. Annotated bibliographies of elementary-age classics with an Earth theme will be available in staff rooms. Librarians may be featuring Trees for Earth Month. A list of Scott Foresman titles with Earth themes is forthcoming as well. The Orion Society's *Bringing the World Alive* is a great bibliography for children's books. Check it out at <http://www.oriononline.org/pages/os/education/btwa.html>

4. Earth Week lunch menus will feature "low on the food chain" choices (one 1/4 pound hamburger represents 600 gallons of water (11 bathtubs), 1.2 pounds of grain, loss of 1.3 pounds of soil. See <http://www.ibuydifferent.org/whatsthedeal/beefTB.asp> (World Wildlife Fund Center for a New American Dream) for more details.

5. No TRASH Snack Day

HAPPY EARTH MONTH!! 🌲

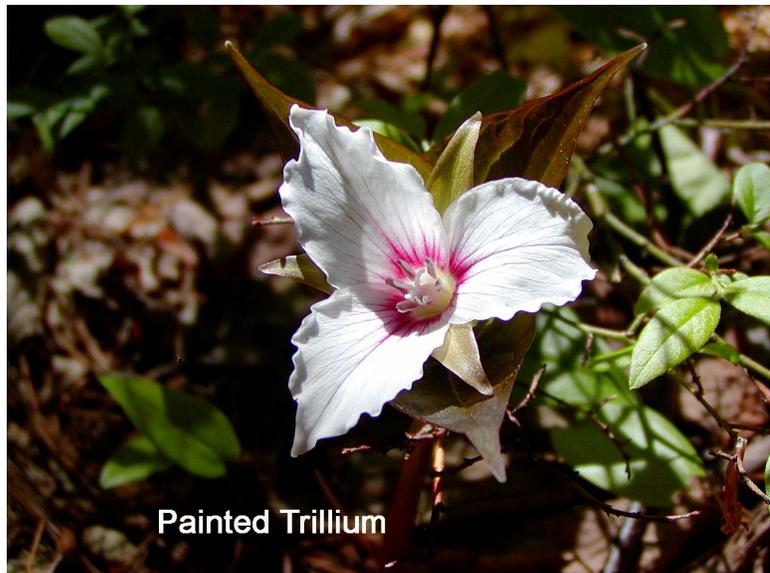
Answers to Photo Quizzes:

p. 2, Whipple Hill

p. 7, Hayden Woods

p. 10, North Street Lot

p. 12, Lot 1 from Walnut St. 🌲



Painted Trillium

Thank You, Fall Walk Leaders

CLC is grateful to the leaders of the 2004 Fall Walks, Nell Walker, Chris Floyd, Winslow Green and Keith Ohmart, for generously sharing their love of our natural environment