

SANCTUARY

Newsletter of
The
White Memorial
Conservation Center
Vol. XXXII No. 4
Fall 2024

Museum Hours:

Tuesday - Saturday 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Sunday 12:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

For Information

Phone: 860-567-0857

E-Mail: info@whitememorialcc.org

Website: www.whitememorialcc.org



*Silver Sturgeon, Hand-colored Etching on Copper Plate
Used with the kind permission of Artist Debby Mason,
<https://www.debbymason.com/>*

Sturgeon in Connecticut

Written by CT DEEP Marine Fisheries Staff, Old Lyme, CT

Of the 200 or so species of finfish swimming in Connecticut waters, sturgeon are among the most primitive and unique-looking fish. Sturgeon appeared in the fossil record around 120 million years ago, making them among the most ancient of fishes with very little change in their appearance over millennia. Like some dinosaurs, they have scutes, or hard plates, instead of scales lining their sides and dorsal (top) surface. They have no true bones, no teeth, and a skeleton of cartilage.

Two species can be found in Connecticut waters: the Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*) and the shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*). The Atlantic sturgeon is the larger of the two and is anadromous, meaning it spends most of its time in coastal saltwater, but swims to freshwater to lay eggs. This species can grow up to 12 feet or more in length and weigh hundreds of pounds. The smaller shortnose sturgeon is more of a freshwater resident, not often moving into the marine zone for extended periods. Connecticut has a resident population of shortnose sturgeon found in the Connecticut River. These fish are usually 2-4 feet in length and were thought not to exceed 4 feet. However, after several decades of dedicated research, many shortnose sturgeon have been captured at lengths larger than four feet.

For both species, maturity is a very slow process: sturgeon take from 10 to 25 years to become sexually mature and can live up to age 60. After reaching maturity, males breed every 1-2 years, but females usually breed every third to sixth year. Females spend multiple years with reduced feeding and growth so that they can produce tens or even hundreds of thousands (shortnose) to 3.8 million (Atlantic) eggs.



Two Sturgeon collected by CT DEEP Marine Fisheries Researchers. The fish at the top is a Shortnose Sturgeon and the fish at the bottom is an Atlantic Sturgeon. Once the information is collected by researchers, these fish are immediately released back into the water.

American colonial journals recorded accounts of huge sturgeon harvested commercially for food. In the late 1800s, sturgeon were second only to lobster among important coastal fisheries. Because of their delayed maturity and long reproductive cycle, over-harvesting of sturgeon for flesh and eggs (a.k.a. caviar) in the 1880s caused sturgeon numbers to plummet.

Life history characteristics, in combination with sensitivity to pollution and loss of access to spawning areas, have all contributed to declining population numbers that will never return to pre-Colonial period levels. Shortnose sturgeon were first listed as endangered in 1967. A coastwide harvest moratorium for Atlantic Sturgeon was implemented in 1998, and Atlantic sturgeon were federally listed as an endangered species in 2012.

To aid in the protection of these endangered fish species, the Fisheries Division staff at CT DEEP have been collecting information on the numbers, locations, movements, and behavior of Connecticut River shortnose and Atlantic sturgeon since 1988. Researchers are able to study sturgeon under a Federal Endangered Species Act permit and are allowed to collect them using nets that we fish from our research vessels. Once collected, data is obtained and passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags are placed into untagged fish for future identification purposes. Additional information, including body length, mouth and eye distance measurements, physical condition, weight, and a fin clip DNA sample, are also obtained. Data from recaptured fish is used to estimate abundance and document movements of adult shortnose and Atlantic sturgeon in the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound.

(Continued on page 2)

Scarce endangered species are hard to keep track of, especially when they travel long distances underwater, as is the case for Atlantic and shortnose sturgeon. Technological advancements and research efforts over the last several decades have attempted to solve this problem by using acoustic transmitters surgically implanted by scientists who hold special research permits, into both endangered species. Acoustic receivers then capture the fish's audible and unique tag code signal as it swims by, and the location information collected helps us identify the fishes' habitat needs, as well as seasonal areas of occupancy, critical to their successful growth and survival. Since sturgeon are both relatively large and long-lived, we use transmitters that last several years so that we can examine changes in movement patterns over time. While acoustic tags have been used by CT researchers since the 1980s, beginning in 2006, passive acoustic receivers were anchored throughout Connecticut waters in areas known or suspected to be important habitats utilized by sturgeon. Receivers deployed by CT researchers are part of the numerous other acoustic arrays distributed along the US East Coast. Some CT receivers were distributed in Long Island Sound (LIS) and others were deployed in the Connecticut River.

Local conservation action is necessary for both our native shortnose and migratory Atlantic sturgeon populations as they face many life history and environmental challenges: climate change impacts, delayed reproductive maturity, non-annual spawning, small population sizes, bycatch mortality, and limited spatial distribution. Citizens can help our research and conservation efforts by reporting sightings such as breaching (sturgeon jumping out of the water), mortality, and bycatch. If you accidentally catch a sturgeon, we ask that you keep the fish in



CT DEEP Marine Fisheries Resource Assistants William Hallett, Nicole Karns, and Chloe Root holding a five-foot Atlantic sturgeon.



An acoustic receiver that was retrieved from the bottom of Long Island Sound. Fish transmitter information logged by the receiver is then downloaded, allowing researchers to analyze the date and time of fish locations and movements.

the water and remove the hook or cut the line as close to the hook as possible. It is illegal to photograph or remove the fish from its natural environment and can be harmful to the fish.

Reporting sturgeon sightings is valuable to CT DEEP research. Any information, past or present, pertaining to condition, catch site, and release details is helpful. Reports of dead and injured sturgeon are encouraged. Carcass retrieval is important to investigate the cause of death and retrieve biological samples that would not otherwise be obtainable. Reporting can be done through CT DEEP's online app, Report-a-Sturgeon, whenever you see a sturgeon. Scan the QR code or follow the link to be brought to the reporting site. Thank you for taking the time to read about these important species. It is our hope that continued research and conservation efforts will preserve and protect these magnificent creatures for generations to come.

To report a sighting to the CT DEEP Sturgeon Reporting App, click on the link or scan the QR code.

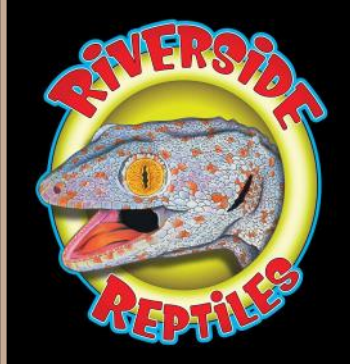
<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/2baf03a76202462eaad2b7b42e51c6a7>



Become a member of **The White Memorial Conservation Center** and take advantage of the member discount, along with free admission to the Nature Museum, a discount in the Gift Shop, and receipt of the quarterly newsletter. Your tax-deductible fee will help sponsor a rich array of programs for children and adults. A family membership is \$60.00 per year. An individual membership is \$40.00 per year. <https://whitememorialcc.org/join-renew/>

THE WHITE MEMORIAL CONSERVATION CENTER
PRESENTS THE 42ND ANNUAL
FAMILY NATURE DAY

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH, 2024
11AM - 5PM + ADMISSION \$6.00
CHILDREN UNDER 12 & CENTER MEMBERS FREE



HORIZON WINGS RAPTOR CENTER
FERNCROFT WILDLIFE RESCUE: OPOSSUMS
WING HAND BAT REHABILITATION
RIVERSIDE REPTILES + COUNTRY QUILT LLAMA FARM
JAKE THE MOOSE MAN + THE SECRET LIVES OF OWLS
MUSIC BY: BOG HOLLOW

WAGON RIDES + TURTLE RACE + GOATS
GUIDED WALKS + DEMONSTRATIONS + PIE SALE
BOOTHS & EXHIBITS + FOOD + LOCAL ARTISANS
GUINEA PIGS + UPSCALE TAG SALE ONLINE AUCTION
LIVE ANIMALS + MUSIC + NATURE CRAFTS FOR KIDS

WIN A TRIP FOR TWO TO SCOTLAND IN OUR RAFFLE!



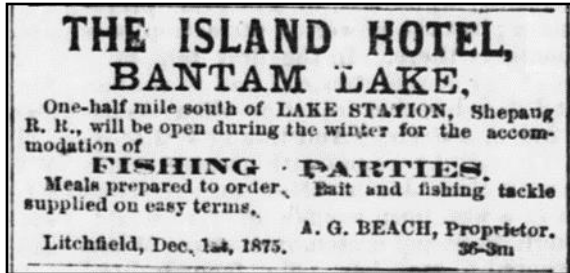
80 WHITEHALL ROAD, LITCHFIELD, CONNECTICUT
LOCATED OFF ROUTE 202
BETWEEN LITCHFIELD AND BANTAM

FOR MORE INFORMATION: 860-567-0857 WWW.WHITEMEMORIALCC.ORG

Before the Whites - The Island Hotel

By Lee Swift Cook

“To erect, maintain and keep a hotel with necessary buildings, to build wharves and boats...” was part of the purpose of the Island Hotel Company. Incorporated in 1874 by a group of Litchfield business men, the Company purchased 35 acres of land on a peninsula at the north end of Bantam Lake and by 1875 the Hotel was open and ready for business. The Litchfield Enquirer, January 21, 1875, reported that, “In digging the well for the Island Hotel quite a find of fossils had been made which have been taken down to the Yale Museum.”



Source: *Litchfield Enquirer*, December 9, 1875.



The Island House, 1893. Photo by N.D. Benedict. Courtesy of the Litchfield Historical Society.

Completion of the Shepaug Railroad to Litchfield in 1872 and the proximity to Lake Station that was located just off what is now North Shore Road, may have played a role in building the hotel. By 1878, the name had been changed to The Island House. “It is a healthy and favorite resort for city people during the summer with a fine grove for picnics.” Litchfield Enquirer, March 13, 1879.



Postcard of the Lakeside Inn, c1909. Courtesy of the Litchfield Historical Society.

“Went Up in Smoke: the Island House Destroyed by Fire” - a long story in The Litchfield Enquirer on September 27, 1894, continued with “one of the most delightful inland resorts in Connecticut.” George Barber purchased the property in 1896 and rebuilt the hotel with a new name, Lakeside Inn, only to have it burn to the ground in January 1901, a \$10,000 loss. A new Lakeside Inn was completed by 1905 and advertised as an “ideal summer resort, fine fishing, boating and bathing. Special attention given to automobile parties.”

In 1911, Alain and May White purchased the 35 acre property with the Inn, and converted it into the Lakeside Convalescent Home for Women, later to become Sheltering Arms, Leake and Watts Camp, Lenox Hill Camp, and now Camp Hope.



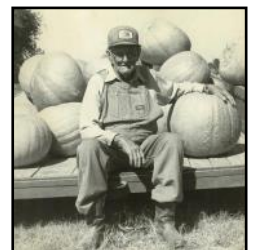
**PUT A VISIT TO THE
MUSEUM GIFT SHOP
ON YOUR
HOLIDAY TO-DO LIST!**

Our shop is brimming with...
Stocking Stuffers, Maple Syrup,
Soaps, Honey, Books,
Plush Toys, Pottery,
Wooden Bowls, Greeting Cards,
And so much more...
Orrrr...put on your jammies and
shop online!

<https://white-memorial-conservation-center.square.site/>

“I would rather sit
on a pumpkin,
and have it all to
myself,
than be crowded
on a velvet
cushion.”

Henry David Thoreau





2024 ANIMAL CARE FUND APPEAL



The Conservation Center reaches out to you for help in defraying the monumental cost of caring for our animal ambassadors throughout the year.

The annual expense of taking care of our birds, reptiles, and amphibians is approximately \$8000!

Your donation, no matter how small, would be greatly appreciated!



Yes! I'd like to help the animal ambassadors at The White Memorial Conservation Center with my gift of:

\$5 \$10 \$20 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

Name: _____ Address: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make your check payable to WMCC, 80 Whitehall Road, P.O. Box 368, Litchfield, CT 06759

Your donation can also be made on-line or over the phone by credit card! Visit www.whitememorialcc.org or call us at 860-567-0857!



“So the sturgeon are dying, in lakes and rivers and oceans all over the world. These giant fish survived the asteroid and the Ice Age and so much more only to be wiped out by cosmically puny obstacles: our dams, our boats, our chemicals, our taste for caviar. In his essay “Sturgeon Moon,” the fisher John Cronin asks us to consider the sheer magnitude of the animal’s heritage in new units. If we translate two hundred million years into a twenty-four-hour clock, we have taken less than one-tenth of a second in the last minute of the last hour to imperil every single subspecies of sturgeon on the planet. Such is the reach of their history and our power to destroy it.

Today, there may be fewer than one hundred Chinese sturgeon capable of returning to the Yangtze each year to breed.

Sometime in the next ten to twenty years, scientists predict, the Chinese sturgeon will go extinct in the wild.”

Sabrina Imbler, [How Far the Light Reaches: A Life in Ten Sea Creatures](#)

SCHOOL VACATION PROGRAMS

LEARN ‘EM AND LOG ‘EM!

Tuesday, November 5 (Election Day)
Grades 5-8, 1:00-4:30pm



Kids, have you ever wanted to use the latest AI technology to get to know the wildlife all around you? This program will do that and more! You’ll go out “in the field” and use apps such as Merlin Bird ID and I-Naturalist to identify wildlife. Then, you can participate in citizen science by submitting your observations. Pre-registration and pre-payment are required. Kids with cell phones should bring them, but it is not required for participation. We’ll ask that a couple free citizen science apps be downloaded ahead of time. Parents are welcome to stay if they choose. Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room. **Admission is FREE for both members and non-members thanks**

to a generous sponsorship from the Torrington Savings Foundation.

ONE-DAY FUN DAY!

Grades 1-3: Friday, Dec. 27; Grades 4-6: Tuesday, Dec. 31, 9:30 am–3:30 pm

Grab your coat, boots, and hat, and let’s spend one of your vacation days learning about the natural world around you. Get outside, play games, make crafts, and meet live animals! A morning snack will be served between adventures. Please bring a lunch and water bottle, and wear appropriate clothing for the weather. Parents/Guardians are welcome to stay, but it is not necessary. Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room. Pre-registration and payment are required. Space is limited! Please inquire about financial aid as needed. **For Grades 1-3, admission is \$40/child for members and \$70/child for non-members. For Grades 4-6, admission is FREE thanks to a generous sponsorship from the Torrington Savings Foundation.**



Barren Strawberry (*Geum fragarioides*) on the White Memorial Foundation Property: A Rare Plant Profile By James Fischer, Research Director, The White Memorial Conservation Center

Introduction

Barren Strawberry was recently confirmed after 20 years since it was first detected on the WMF property. In Connecticut, Barren Strawberry occurs in only one other location, thereby designating it as an endangered (CT DEEP) and Critically Imperiled (Nature Serve) species in the state. This species is declining throughout New England and New Jersey (Buczynski, 2019; Massachusetts Div. of Fish. & Wildlife, 2015). The leaf of Barren Strawberry resembles that of Common Strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*) while the term “barren” refers to how the plant’s fruit is not sweet and fleshy like its common look-a-like.



Figure A. County Distribution of Barren Strawberry from USDA, Plant Database accessed July 17, 2024.



Figure B. Britton, N.L., and A. Brown, 1913, from USDA Plant Database accessed July 17, 2024

White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*) and American Elm (*Ulmus americana*) mortality. The soil is thin and rocky, composed of coarse glacial till. Associated vegetative species include Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*), Yellow Birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*), Musclemwood (*Carpinus caroliniana*), Skunk Cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*), Cinnamon Fern (*Osmundastrum cinnamomeum*) and New York Fern (*Amauropelta noveboracensis*).

Life History

Barren Strawberry is a terrestrial, perennial evergreen rhizomatous herb with basal leaves and yellow 5-petaled flowers appearing on a leafless stem. Flowers bloom in early to late spring (May – June). The trifoliate leaf resembles strawberry, but is more triangular. It lacks any fleshy fruit, but produces seeds in a cluster of dry achenes. Current knowledge of pollinators is lacking, but are likely flies and bees that are attracted to yellow flowers (Hill, 2003). Little is known about seed dispersers, but it is possibly distributed by ants, birds, and mammals (Buczynski, 2019).

Barren Strawberry primarily reproduces vegetatively, which can form dense clonal colonies arising from creeping rhizomes underneath the soil surface. Although it can be locally abundant, in some populations the genetic diversity within these colonies can be low (Buczynski, 2019). Seed dispersal is low due to low seed production and the lack of flavorful fruit, which attracts consumers. Barren Strawberry can self-pollinate, which can add to a genetic bottleneck effect of this species (Hill 2003).

Habitat

On the White Memorial Foundation’s property Barren Strawberry inhabits the margins of a spring seep wetland located toward the bottom of a slope under a mixed hardwood/conifer forest with minimal shrub density. This species is shade tolerant and inhabits a small canopy gap that developed recently due to



Figure C. Barren Strawberry photograph by Thomas G. Barnes from USDA Plant Database accessed July 17, 2024

Population Assessment and Monitoring

The recent population assessment occurred on July 5, 2024, with William Moorhead, Botanist/Plant Community Ecologist, CT DEEP Natural Diversity Data Base. White Memorial staff and volunteers revisited the population and flagged every ramet encountered during a random walk through the habitat. Systematic surveys will occur and include similar microhabitats nearby.

(continued on page 7)

Barren Strawberry (*Geum fragarioides*)
Continued from page 6

Threats and Management Considerations

Threats to Barren Strawberry populations include numerous anthropogenic disturbances such as competitive plant species, compacted soils, and hydrological changes. Clearcutting, logging roads, and recreational trails compact soils and enhance competitive plant species (Buczynski, 2019; Hill, 2003; Massachusetts Div. of Fish. & Wildlife, 2015). Runoff during rain events causes sheet erosion by carrying away thin soil (Buczynski, 2019; Hill, 2003). Land development and habitat fragmentation are detrimental to population connectivity and sustainability (Buczynski, 2019; Hill, 2003). Expanding impermeable surfaces, groundwater extraction from wells, and extreme droughts influence the water table and micronutrients available to this population. Even if the site remains intact for the near future, shade tolerant invasive plants are an additional threat. Barren Strawberry grows amongst invasive shrubs including Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), Morrow’s Honeysuckle (*Lonicera morrowii*), and Winged Euonymus (*Euonymus alatus*). Shade tolerant herbaceous invasive species are serious threats and include Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), Narrowleaf Bittercress (*Cardamine impatiens*), and Japanese Stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*). Natural forest disturbances such as windthrows, flooding, and mortality caused by pests and diseases will encourage invasive plants unless they are controlled.

Forest management activities need to be well-planned by managers to limit environmental impact, including creating buffer zones. Controlling invasive species must be a priority at this site. Avoid aerial herbicide application to prevent damaging nontarget plants. Hand-pulling invasive species could be helpful in outlying areas, but could disturb soil and negatively impact nontarget plants. There is some evidence that Barren Strawberry may benefit from fire due to the mobilization of

micronutrients (Hill, 2003). However, the frequency and severity of fire as a management tool for this species has received little attention. Combining high-temperature propane torches with targeted herbicide application could be useful for controlling invasive species such as Japanese Barberry (Ward et al., 2013). Maintaining water bars, which mitigate sheet erosion on wood roads by directing water off the road, is important. When sediment clogs the armor outlet, over-washed stormwater erodes forest floor leaf litter and transports invasive plant seeds into the forest interior. Investigations assessing the genetic variability of this population need to occur. If heterogeneity decreases, then inbreeding depression will impact the viability of this population.

Initiative-taking measures that encourage the population growth will help sustain it. Propagating plants from other populations ensures genetic heterogeneity when cross pollinated. Selectively felling or girdling trees produces small gaps in the forest canopy, which could encourage the population by stimulating natural propagation by incrementally increasing sunlight, while minimizing the disturbance to the microclimate (Hill, 2003).

Literature Cited

Buczynski, R. 2019. *Waldsteinia fragarioides* var. *fragarioides* Rare Plant Profile. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks and Forestry, New Jersey Forest Service, Office of Natural Lands Management, New Jersey Natural Heritage Program, Trenton, NJ. 11 pp.

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Ward, J. S., S. C. Williams, and T. E. Worthley. 2013. Japanese barberry control methods reference guide for foresters and professional woodland managers. Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Special Bulletin – February 2013. 12 pp.

**TEACHERS, PARENTS, AND GROUP LEADERS,
 CHECK OUT WHAT WE CAN OFFER YOUR CHILDREN!**

PROGRAMS FOR SCHOOLS/GROUPS

can be presented at White Memorial, at your facility, or even virtually!

The Possibilities are Endless...

- Amazing Adaptations
- The Wildlife Outside Our Windows
- Animal Tricksters
- Do the Locomotion
- Rare and Remarkable
- ...Plus So Many More!

To view all program descriptions and for more information, visit whitememorialcc.org, call 860-567-0857, or email carrie@whitememorialcc.org.

Vacation Programs (See page 5)



Learn 'Em and Log 'Em
 Tuesday, November 5 (Election Day)

One-Day Fun Day
 Grades 1-3: Friday, December 27
 Grades 4-6: Tuesday, December 31

Nature's Nursery (See page 9)
 First Thursday of Every Month

After-School Adventures (See page 8)
 Tuesdays and Wednesdays in October

Scout Programs



Custom-designed programs for cub scouts and girl scouts can help fulfill badge requirements! We also offer free camping to all youth non-profits.

Make a Difference

In her continuing series, Zoë Greenwood helps you find small ways to help the environment.

Having an ecological/environmental mindset never sleeps. When you begin that way of living, it seems as though everything you do, everything you see, everything you use goes through a filter of “what is the environmental impact of this decision?” While it is not always easy to make a “right” choice, there is a lot you can do to reduce your personal impact.

Which makes me think of the coming fall and the inevitable frost and cold weather yet to come. “But wait!” you say. “It’s still summer, and a hot and humid one to boot! I don’t want to think of cold weather just yet.”

I’m not really asking you to do that, I AM asking you to prepare for what is to come as best as you can. If you have a vegetable garden, and I hope that you do, you want to continue to harvest vegetables as long as possible. You want to eke out every last squash and tomato before you are forced to go into your stored and canned and frozen foodstuffs and use up what you meant for the colder winter months.

As you are probably already freezing and canning the excess produce there is still a lot that can be done to just lengthen the growing season. Leaving veggies in the garden as long as possible has its own sense of fulfillment. You aren’t spending hours in the kitchen and are still eating yummy home-grown food! Plus, each house only has so much space for storage!

For years, hubby and I have used a series of old bed sheets, tablecloths, buckets, towels and lightweight blankets and so on to cover gardens, both flower and vegetable, when frost was threat-

ened. (Just remember to uncover all of the gardens as early in the morning as possible, otherwise, you run the risk of burning the very plants you’re trying to save.) At the end of the season, I just washed all the cloth and stored it in a big



box in the shed, ready for next year. It worked just fine. But since we have always had to choose between which produce to protect or which stunning flower garden to cover, I got to thinking about what else could be used as frost covers. Imagine my surprise when I was at the local garden center and discovered a product designed to do just that! Someone has already invented a product which is readily available to use as a cover. In fact, it has been designed with just that purpose in mind. But, dear reader, you know that I am about using what is al-

ready available and ready to be recycled anyway. Cardboard boxes; bubble wrap; the thin foam that things are sometimes bundled in; opened cereal boxes, taped together; you get the idea. There are SO MANY things that can be used to cover crops!

So, we began to save and hoard any boxes and bubble wrap that we came across. We asked neighbors and family and friends to save suitable wrapping for us. We designated an area of the shed where such things could be stored. We broke down the boxes to make storing easier. We rolled the bubble wrap by size. We put the newspaper in a paper bag. Then, we stored all of this in a large box that one of the neighbors had received a shipment in. We’ll keep the big box since it fits nicely in the shed corner. When the newspaper or cardboard gets too yucky, we can still recycle it, but it will have been used for yet another purpose first. We’ve also begun to save small rocks and bricks, etc. to weigh down the corners of the covers so that the wind doesn’t remove them for us.

I put duct tape on the shopping list. I figure that we will need to reconstruct the boxes and make cylinders out of the bubble wrap and sheet foam.

I can’t tell you yet how any of this will work out. I am not ready to even try. There is still some delightful late summer and early fall weather to look forward to. But I CAN tell you that we are ready! We probably don’t have enough covers for every single plant, but I’m sure we have enough to protect our favorites. So, start prepping. Save those boxes. Save that bubble wrap. You can *make a difference*, too, if you do!



AFTER-SCHOOL ADVENTURES!

Grades 1-3: Tuesdays in October (except the 1st)

Grades 4-6: Wednesdays in October (except the 2nd)

4:00-5:15pm

Bring your kids out to White Memorial for programs

designed to awaken curiosity and foster an appreciation for the natural world.

Adults are welcome to stay, but it is not necessary. Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room.

Pre-registration and pre-payment are required. Space is limited. Please

inquire about financial aid as needed.

For Grades 1-3, admission is \$9/child per session for members and \$13/child per

session for non-members. For Grades 4-6, admission is FREE thanks to a generous

sponsorship from the Torrington Savings Foundation.



Lace Up Your Hiking Boots! The White Memorial Foundation Trail Passport is Here!

Story & Photo by Gerri Griswold, Director of Administration and Development

Colebrook resident Sophia D'Urso is a student at the University of New Hampshire with a major in Recreation Management and Policy. Her dream upon graduating is to become a National Park Ranger. "I love being outdoors and I love conservation." Sophia volunteered at White Memorial in 2023 for university credit hours. Last winter she contacted me for references and I asked why had she not applied for our summer camp positions? After interviewing with Education Director, Carrie Szwed, D'Urso landed the position of Discovery Camp Co-Leader for children entering grades 1 & 2. "It was the best summer ever!", D'Urso exuberantly exclaims! Another component of her work last summer was to develop and complete a project that would enhance and benefit White Memorial and its guests. The first project pitched to Sophia was a Trail Passport. This idea has been knocked about by Conservation Center staff for at least five years. But, composing it takes a huge investment of time. "The first idea Gerri had was this Trail Passport. It really spoke to me. I love being outside and I want everybody to be outside, so it was the perfect project."

I headed off to Iceland for ten days. Making the Passport involved D'Urso hiking every trail (over 40 miles) and familiarizing herself with the nuances of each. She then created several prototypes based on a real passport. Upon my return, she had completed the project. Talk about an over-achiever! The prototype was then passed out to staff for edits.

Sophia's hard work resulted in a stunningly beautiful booklet that is easy to use. The premise of the Passport is to hike each trail. With the completion of a trail, the user will bring their passport into the Gift Shop to have it stamped. Upon completion of all forty miles, the user's name will be put into a drawing for a lovely prize.

D'Urso and I ventured over to Photo Arts in Torrington to talk production with owner, Mark Langenheim. Since 2016, Mark has been responsible for the printing of every letterhead, flyer, poster, envelope, and newsletter used by

was fifteen. My parents owned and operated *The Connecticut Guild of Craftsmen*, so they did their own printing of the Guild's newsletter and had a little darkroom set up. I started working after school when I was a sophomore learning how to run the press and work in the dark room. When I graduated in 1983, I worked full time. We turned a four-car garage into a printshop."

The operation kept growing to the point of buying a building on Putter Lane in 2004 where Photo Arts is today. The tragic sudden passing of Mark's beloved father spurred Mark and his mother to move forward. "My Dad wasn't the printer. He was the people person. He enjoyed the social part with customers. I wanted to be a printer...not a businessman. I wanted to print as soon as I walked into the print shop at Torrington High School. As soon as I smelled the ink it just hit me, OH MY GOD, this is what I wanted to do!"

When Sophia and I brought the Passport to Mark, we had concerns. How much will this cost? How much will it retail for? Should we find a sponsor? In a knee jerk reaction, Mark offered to sponsor our Passport. "An opportunity presented itself to me. I love White Memorial, and I have always enjoyed working with you. I said, we can do this. Let us do it and you won't need to shop for a sponsor. It was a done deal."

The staff at White Memorial is deeply grateful to Sophia for her tenacity and vision and to Mark for generously sponsoring this project. Dreams do come true.

The White Memorial Trail Passport will go on sale this November in our gift shop, just in time for holiday hiking and gift giving. Passports will retail for \$8, or \$10 if bundled with a trail map. Passport Holiday Gift Boxes will be available in the Gift Shop in late November.



Sophia D'Urso and Mark Langenheim pose perfectly with their Passport.

the White Memorial Foundation and Conservation Center. He fabricated the background for our recent Passenger Pigeon exhibit. Printing has been in Mark's blood since he was a child. A Torrington native, he attended Oliver Wolcott Technical School for printmaking. "I started a little printshop in my cellar when I



Nature's Nursery Series

Thursdays, October 3, November 7, and December 5

Ages 3-6 years

4:00pm

Join us on the *first* Thursday of each month from October - December for an engaging program designed just for your young nature lovers. Every session will last 45 minutes - 1 hour and include a story, an encounter with a live animal, and an activity or craft. Some of our activities might be outside, so dress for the weather and wear good walking shoes. *Advanced registration is required. To register, visit whitememorialcc.org or call 860-567-0857. Space is limited. Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room. We require that one parent/caretaker stay for the duration of the program, but our room cannot accommodate more than one adult per child. Please inquire about financial aid as needed.*

Members: \$9/child per session or \$24/whole series

Non-Members: \$13/child per session or \$36/whole series



Fall 2024 Calendar of Events

For more information on any of our programs, please call us at 860-567-0857 or register online: www.whitememorialcc.org

SEPTEMBER

28-Oct. 4 **Museum Kids Free Week ***
Courtesy of Joan and Jack Benham
honoring Wesley D. Parcell



SEPTEMBER 28th
42nd ANNUAL
FAMILY NATURE DAY

Riverside Reptiles
Wing Hand Bat Rehabilitation
Jake the Moose Man
Horizon Wings Raptor Center
Ferncroft Wildlife Rescue:
Opossums!
Music: Bog Hollow

11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
See page 3 for details.

OCTOBER


After-School Adventures
Sponsored by the Torrington Savings Foundation
Tuesdays and Wednesdays in October
For grades 1 - 6
See page 8 for details.

Nature's Nursery Series
October 3, November 7, December 5
See page 9 for details.


5 **Tiny Trekking with Kelly Orr**
10:00 a.m., Meet in the Museum.

5 & 6 **Learn the Art of Taxidermy**
with Gotham Taxidermy
BOTH SESSIONS SOLD OUT!

12 **The Fungus Among Us!**
with Dave Paton
See page 11 for details.



12 **Mindful Playtime:**
Yoga in the Woods
with Amanda Glover
See page 11 for details.




12 - 18 **Museum Kids Free Week ***
In Memory of Tish Samponaro from her
husband Philip G. Samponaro

14 **COLUMBUS DAY/
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY**
Museum & Offices



16 **Moose in Connecticut**
with Andrew LaBonte
See page 11 for details.




October 17, November 21, December 19
Happy Hour Hiking Club
4:00 p.m., Meet in the Museum.

18 **Star Party**
Astronomy program. Star gazing...weather
permitting. 7:00 p.m. A. B. Ceder Room.

19 **An Autumn Hike through Slab Meadow**
10:00 a.m., Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room.

26 - Nov. 1 **Museum Kids Free Week ***
In Memory of Ron Hummel
from His Family and Friends

26 **New England Apples**
with Russell Steven Powell
& Barr Weeks
See page 11 for details.



NOVEMBER

2 **Circumnavigating Five Ponds**
11:00 a.m., Meet at the trailhead where Routes
63/61 meet! Register by calling 860-567-0857
or online: www.whitememorialcc.org

November 5, December 3
Fresh Start Hiking Club
7:45 a.m., Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room.

5 **Election Day Program for Kids!**
Learn 'Em and Log 'Em
See page 5 for details.

First Wednesday of each month from
November 6, 2024 to March 5, 2025
Dark of Winter Yoga
with Judith Ehrman-Shapiro (virtual)
5:30 p.m - 6:45 p.m., \$12.00
Register by calling Judith: 860-309-9489.


9 - 15 **Museum Kids Free Week***
In honor of Louise W. Willson

9 **The Pandemic Pantry**
with Gerri Griswold
Mediterranean Meals!
Bring your appetite and your sass!
12:00 p.m., Zoom and Facebook Live!
For Zoom registrations visit:
www.whitememorialcc.org




12 **Tiny Trekking with Kelly Orr**
10:00 a.m., Meet in the Museum.

15 **Star Party**
Astronomy program. Star gazing
will follow, weather permitting.
7:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room




16 **Emperor of the Night: Owls**
with Colleen Harrak
See page 11 for details.



23 - 29 **Museum Kids Free Week ***
Courtesy of the Swift Family
In Memory of Betsy & Henry Swift

23 **California Here I Come!**
Exploring the Golden State in
Real Time with Tom Alena!
See page 11 for details.




* Free admission for children ages
12 and under when accompanied by an adult.

28/ 29 **THANKSGIVING**
Museum & Offices Closed



30 **Walking the**
Cranberry Pond Trail
2:00 p.m., Meet at the Cranberry
Pond trailhead on Webster Road. Pre-register
by calling 860-567-0857 or register online:
www.whitememorialcc.org




DECEMBER

4 **Tiny Trekking with Kelly Orr**
10:00 a.m., Meet in the Museum.


6 **AFTER HOURS SIP & SHOP!**
See page 12 for details.

7 **Wreath Making Workshop**
with Jean Bronson
See page 11 for details.




7 **Joy to the World: Holiday Music for**
Guitar and Mandolin
with Judy Handler & Mark Levesque
See page 11 for details.

14 **Famous Animals in History**
with Gerri Griswold
See page 11 for details.



14 **The Old Leatherman**
with Shirley Sutton
See page 11 for details.



15 **Litchfield Hills Audubon**
Christmas Bird Count
To volunteer, email Dave Tripp
dtrippjr@gmail.com



21-27 **Museum Kids Free Week ***
Courtesy of Tara and Arthur Diedrick
In honor of Adele and Joseph d'Assern

21 **A Holiday Stroll Up Apple Hill**
10:00 a.m., Meet at the Apple Hill Trailhead
on East Shore Rd. Pre-register: 860-567-0857
or online: www.whitememorialcc.org

21 **Iceland's Unseen: Elves & Hidden People**
with Ragnhildur Jonsdottir
See page 11 for details.

25 **CHRISTMAS**
Museum & Offices Closed



December 27 & 31
One-Day Fun Day at White Memorial!
Grades 1 - 6
See page 5 for details.

28 **White Memorial Photo Challenge**
2:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room & ZOOM

31 **New Year's Eve Hike to Little Pond**
9:00 a.m., Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room
Festive attire is optional!

Adult Nature Study Workshops & Saturday Programs: Fall 2024



SOLD OUT!

Learn the Art of Taxidermy with Gotham Taxidermy
October 5 & 6, 2024, A. B. Ceder Room
All Tickets: \$250 / Cash or Check, \$260 / Credit Card
Call 860-567-0857 to be placed on a waiting list.

In this class, we will learn about the fascinating anatomy of mammals and traditional mammal taxidermy with Divya Anantharaman. This class is designed for beginners with an interest in taxidermy. No matter the experience level, all are welcome! Students will learn everything they need to create their very own mouse taxidermy mount.



California Here I Come! Exploring the Golden State in Real Time with Tom Alena
November 23, 2024, 3:00 p.m., ZOOM & A. B. Ceder Room
Members: FREE Non-Members: \$10.00

Our favorite Californian is back! Today you will explore the great state of California with Tom Alena in Real Time using the ALERT-California Camera System. Investigate microclimates of the state and how its geology affects various climates. You might witness wildfires in progress, snow in the mountains, foggy coasts and more!



The Fungus Among Us with Dave Paton
October 12, 2024, 10:00 a.m., A. B. Ceder Room
Members: \$15.00 Non-Members: \$30.00
Foraging is not allowed on Foundation property!

Spend a couple of hours in the forest with Dave ,learning do's and don'ts, basic identification, and stories behind all of the fungus among us! The program begins with a brief introduction in the Ceder Room to view some specimens. Dress for the weath-



Wreath Making Workshop with Jean Bronson
December 7, 2024, 2:00 p.m., Activity Shed
Members & Non-Members: \$60.00
Members Only Registration through October 31
Non-Member Registration after October 31

Make your own wreath for the holiday season! Using local materials and ribbon, you will create a beautiful wreath. Workshop instructor Jean Bronson will teach you to complete a wreath in an afternoon. No prior wreath making experience is necessary. Wear old clothes. Pine pitch is sticky! All materials included!



Mindful Playtime: Yoga in the Woods
October 12, 2024, 10:00 a.m., Apple Hill Trailhead
Members: FREE Non-Members: \$10.00

Let's head out to Cat Swamp and Apple Hill to commune with Nature and learn a few basic yoga movements with Amanda Glover. Tree Pose with a Tree!

Chair Pose against a tree! Breathwork as you walk. Sip herbal tea & enjoy a treat!



Joy to the World: Holiday Music for Guitar & Mandolin
December 7, 2024, 7:00 p.m., Carriage House
All Tickets: \$15.00

The incomparable Judy Handler and Mark Levesque perform a lovely holiday concert filled with enchanting instrumental renditions of traditional and contemporary holiday music.



Who's the Boss? Moose in Connecticut
October 16, 2024, 7:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room,
Members: FREE Non-Members: \$10.00

It's National Bosses Day and who is the CEO of Connecticut's mammals? The Moose, of course! Learn all the scoop about this incredibly majestic and ...er...really big mammal from State of Connecticut DEEP Wildlife Biologist, Andrew Labonte. Andy will introduce you to our local Moose population.



Famous Animals in History with Gerri Griswold
December 14, 2024, 10:00 a.m.
ZOOM & A. B. Ceder Room
Members: FREE Non-Members: \$10.00

Meet the beasts, hear their stories, and marvel over their accomplishments in this ninety-minute presentation that celebrates famous historical animals.



New England Apples
October 26, 2024, 2:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room
Members: \$10.00 Non-Members: \$15.00

Join Apple Aficionados Russell Powell and Barr Weeks as they weave the delicious story of apple growing in Connecticut. Learn about apple history, their growing cycle, Connecticut's ten most popular apples, and some rarer New England varieties. Samples will be available in raw form as well as pie form! Vote for your favorite!



The Old Leatherman with Shirley Sutton
December 14, 2024, 2:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room
Members: \$5.00 Non-Members: \$10.00

In the 1800's a mysterious wanderer hiked Westchester County, New York, western Connecticut, and the Berkshires. Speaking very little, he communicated primarily with hand gestures. In his leather "suit", he was a curious and fearful sight. But as residents grew to expect his appearances, they happily embraced his simple requests.



Emperor of the Night: Owls with Colleen Harrak
November 16, 2024, 2:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room
Members: \$5.00 Non-Members: \$10.00

Experience why owls rule the night in this engaging program featuring our live barred owls and a digital presentation. Venture back in time to learn how owls have been viewed by human cultures all over the world and learn the science (or lack thereof!) behind some of these beliefs. *Recommended age of 10 and above. No small children, please.*



Iceland's Unseen: Elves & Hidden People
December 21, 2024, 2:00 p.m.
ZOOM & A. B. Ceder Room
Members: FREE Non-Members: \$10.00

Iceland has always been a land full of mysteries and wonder, from its numerous volcanoes to its breathtaking landscapes, to the fact that 60% of Icelanders believe in Elves and Huldufolk (Hidden People). But why? For her entire life, Ragnhildur Jonsdottir has been gifted with the ability to communicate with Iceland's Unseen.



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And INSTAGRAM: @whitememorialcc

WHITE MEMORIAL
CONSERVATION
CENTER'S

2ND ANNUAL

Holiday Sip and Shop

FRIDAY
DECEMBER 6TH
5 - 7 PM

Music, Drinks, Snacks and Shopping!
Now Featuring Local Vendors
Throughout the Museum!
One Stop Shopping!



WHAT'S INSIDE THIS
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WHITE MEMORIAL THANKS
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