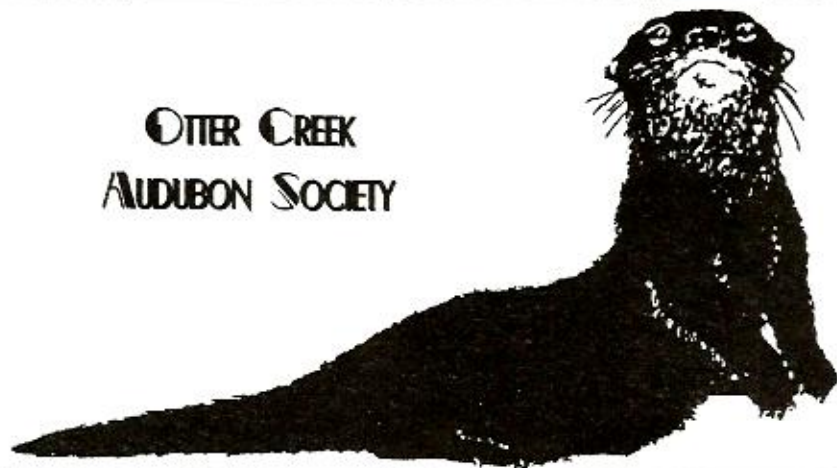


OTTER CREEK
AUDUBON SOCIETY



OTTER TRACKS

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Wilderness Conference at Middlebury College in October!

The Environmental Studies Department at Middlebury College is holding a two-evening Wilderness conference entitled "Something Wild, Something Managed: Wilderness in the Northeastern Landscape" on October 5 and 6. There will be a total of three discussion panels and Bill McKibben will close as the keynote speaker. This event is free and open to any interested listeners.

This conference will bring together activists, land managers, and academics from throughout the Northeast to discuss current prospects for wilderness in the Northeast. In the last century, there has been an "explosion of green" in the region as forests have reclaimed abandoned farmland. Animals

long gone from the region, such as the moose and beaver, are also returning. The time has come for us as a society to more explicitly think about the opportunities this largely unplanned recovery presents for the Northeast. Over two days, we will focus on the role of wilderness in the larger northeastern landscape. Panels will explore the northeastern landscape in national and historical context, the values that flow directly from wilderness areas—especially for protecting and enhancing biological diversity, and how wilderness lands fit into the larger sustainably managed landscape. The conference will conclude with a keynote address by author and Adirondack resident Bill McKibben.

Thursday October 5

Session 1: Northeastern Wilderness in Context

4:15-5:45 PM, DANA AUDITORIUM

Moderator: Kathy Morse, Assistant Professor of History, Midd. College

Panelists: Emily Russell, ecological historian, Rutgers University
Nancy Smith, Executive Director, Sweet Water Trust

Paul Brewster, Forest Supervisor, GMNF

Session 2: The Values of Wilderness 8:00-9:30 PM, DANA AUDITORIUM

Moderator: Steve Trombulak, Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies, Middlebury College

Panelists: Elizabeth Thompson, ecologist, Vermont Nature Conservancy
Tom Butler, editor, *Wild Earth* magazine
Spencer Philips, economist, Wilderness Society

Friday October 6

Session 3: Surrounding Wilderness with Sustainably Managed Lands

4:15-5:45 PM, DANA AUDITORIUM

Moderator: Nan Jenks-Jay, Director of Environmental Affairs and Planning, Middlebury College

Panelists: David Brynn, forester & president, Vermont Family Forests

Vern Grubinger, director, Center for Sustainable Agriculture, UVM

Joan Roelofs, author on sustainable cities, Keene State College

Keynote: 8:00 PM, MEAD CHAPEL

Introduction: Chris McGrory Klyza, Associate Professor of Political Science & Environmental Studies, Midd. College

Speaker: Bill McKibben, "Notes on Restraint: The Northern Forest as Embarrassing Example"

Reception: Redfield Proctor Hall, 9:30 PM

Fall 2000 Fill-Up for Feathered Friends!

It's time again for the annual Otter Creek Audubon and Middlebury Agway bird feed sale! Now is your chance to fill your feeders and seed storage barrels for the winter more cheaply than before, and support the many activities of Otter Creek Audubon in the process.

Last October we had orders for just over two tons of bird seed, and made \$400 for Otter Creek Audubon's programs. This year we're going to try to reach 5000 pounds of seed orders! Plan ahead, tell your friends (they need not be members of OCAS to order), and send in the order right away. (Don't put it off, and risk losing the order form). Also, notice there are some discount bargains on bird feeders and some new flavors of bird feeds.

Fill out the order blank completely, tear it off, attach the check, and mail it in. Also mark your calendar for October 29th, so you won't forget to pick up the seeds. Otter Creek Audubon and your feathered friends thank you for your help.

Snow Goose Field Station

The Snow Geese will visit Dead Creek again this fall on their annual migration south to their wintering grounds on Chesapeake Bay and the coastal marshes of Virginia and the Carolinas. OCAS will again provide a program in the field for those interested people who stop in the pull-off parking area on Rt. 17 in Addison to watch thousands of geese as they feed in adjacent fields. We will be handing out cider and donut holes as well as information about the geese and maps of their migration. We will have spotting scopes available and will be prepared to answer questions.

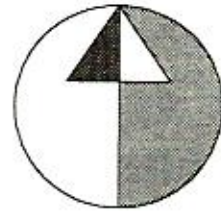
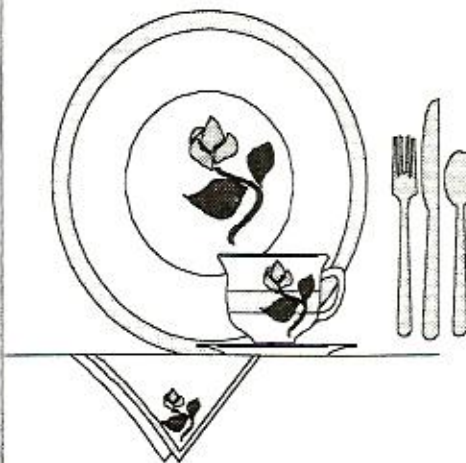
This will happen at peak migration time, the weekend of October 21 and 22, from 10:30 to 2:30. OCAS board members will be pressed into duty and we welcome other helpers as well. Please

call Judy Peterson at 475-2620 if you would like to volunteer an hour or two to this project. It's one that provides a needed service and gets us a lot of good publicity.

OCAS Annual Dinner 2000 Featuring Steve Trombulak

Otter Creek Audubon's annual dinner will take place at Middlebury College's Kirk Alumni Center on Thursday evening, November 2nd. A cash bar will open at 5 PM, with dinner at 6. The guest speaker, Professor Stephen Trombulak of Middlebury College's Departments of Biology and Environmental Studies, will speak at 7. Recently returned from a sabbatical in Australia, Professor Trombulak will offer provocative insights into the relationship between the cultural and natural worlds. He is the author, with Prof. Chris McGrory Klyza, of The Story of Vermont: A Natural and Cultural History (1999) and coeditor, also with Klyza, of The Future of the Northern Forest (1994).

All OCAS members will receive a mailed invitation. There will be a charge of about \$20 for dinner. Those wishing only to hear Professor Trombulak may come without charge at 7.



Review: National Park Service's 1999 Natural Resource Year in Review

This annual review of activities in the national parks is always fascinating reading. It features two-page summaries of research and management initiatives and program highlights in the parks in the past year.

One report describes research undertaken on the bottom of Yellowstone Lake, where a dive team discovered hundreds of pinnacles up to 115 feet tall. The pinnacles, composed of amorphous silica and containing the remains of diatoms and bacteria, were formed in the past 12,000 years as the result of water circulation from deep hydrothermal vents.

Another report traces the cause of decline of threatened island foxes on Channel Islands National Park on the California coast. Introduced nonnative pigs provide a prey base adequate to support a small population of Golden Eagles, initially established in the 1980s. The Golden Eagles in turn eliminated a local population of Bald Eagles and have preyed opportunistically on foxes to the point that the foxes are likely to be eliminated. Removing both Golden Eagles and pigs will permit a return to the normal predator-prey balance.

A perusal of the broad range of research and management concerns makes it clear that no park is exempt from human-caused impacts. These impacts often threaten the integrity of ecological processes necessary to maintain the long-term environmental health of the parks. In 1999 the U.S. Congress approved a doubling of the budget for preservation of the parks' natural heritage in a five-year action plan called the "Natural Resource Challenge."

New OCAS Board Members

In the June 2000 issue of Otter Tracks we introduced two new members of the OCAS Board of Directors. Here we present profiles of two additional board members.

Barb Karle is an energetic new member from Middlebury. She received her degree in environmental education from Michigan State University, and has taught in Addison County for 15 years. Presently, she teaches science at the Middlebury Union Middle School. She has two children who keep her busy, but she dreams of returning to Denali National Park in Alaska, where her family has had a long connection. Closer to home, Barb is an avid gardener and is eager to become more involved in birding.

In September the OCAS Board elected Mike Winslow as a board member. Mike has an undergraduate degree from St. Lawrence University, taught at the Keewaydin Environmental Education Center on Lake Dunmore in Salisbury for several years, and taught in Latin America for two years. He currently resides in Weybridge, where he is completing a thesis for a master's degree in botany at the University of Vermont. His thesis explores changes over time in the diversity of plant species along disused logging roads in the Northeast Kingdom. Mike is an avid birder and has participated actively in OCAS' annual Birdathon and the Middlebury Christmas Bird Count.

The OCAS Board welcomes the energy and insights of these new board members.

AGWAY COUPON

Otter Creek Audubon Special

Save 25% on any bird house or feeder in stock!

Save \$5.00 off the new feeds listed below:

Woodpecker's Pick 20#
Sunflower Kernels 20#
Chickadee's Choice 16#
Shell-less Select 20#

Coupon expires 11/12/00

West Nile Virus Watch

If you find a dead bird, particularly one that was not just harvested by your car or a picture window, the Epidemiology Section of the Vermont Department of Health would like to check it out. Although no birds have yet been found in Vermont with West Nile virus, virus-infected birds have been found in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New York. Crows and Blue Jays, raptors and House Sparrows have shown the highest rates of infection, but the virus is not restricted to these species. Call the Addison County Office of the Vermont Department of Health at 388-4644. The office is located at 700 Exchange Street, Suite 101, in Middlebury. You may bring in a dead bird in a plastic bag, fresh or frozen, for testing. Although West Nile virus is blood-borne and transmitted by mosquitoes, the Department of Health suggests that you wear gloves when collecting the dead bird or call the Department at the above number for assistance or further information.

Calendar of Events

Hawk Watch on Buck Mountain: October 15, Sunday, 10 AM-2 PM. Meet at Ilsley Library parking lot, Middlebury.

Snow Goose Field Station: October 21-22, Saturday and Sunday, 10:30 AM-2:30 PM. Snow Goose Viewing Area, Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area on Route 17 just west of Route 22a in Addison. See article, this issue.

Bird Seed Sale: October 29, Sunday, 10 AM-2:30 PM. Agway, Exchange Street, Middlebury. See article, this issue.

Otter Creek Audubon Annual Dinner: November 2, Thursday, 5-9 PM. Kirk Alumni Center, South Main Street (Route 30), Middlebury. See article, this issue.

Winter Solstice Celebration: December 21, Thursday, 7 PM. Spirit In Nature, Goshen Road, Ripton. Call Heidi Willis at 352-4327.

Other Events

Something Wild, Something Managed: Wilderness in Northeastern Landscapes: October 5-6, Thursday and Friday. Conference at Middlebury College. Call Janet Wiseman at 443-5710. See article, this issue.

Middlebury College Environmental Fair: November 16, Thursday, late afternoon. Redfield Proctor Hall, Middlebury College. Call Amy Seif at 443-5043.

Middlebury College Environmental Studies Colloquium: Thursdays through December, 12:20-1:20 PM. Gifford Annex Lounge, Middlebury College. Call Janet Wiseman at 443-5710 for speakers.

OCAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2000-2001

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US Congress Ready to Move on Conservation and Reinvestment Act

When Congress returns from summer recess in September, among the key issues to be debated is the future of the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA). This bill has passed the House of Representatives and was voted favorably out of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. It must now pass the full Senate, and a House-Senate conference committee must settle differences in the language of the bills in each house.

CARA offers significant and guaranteed funding from federal revenues resulting from leases of portions of the outer continental shelf to petroleum companies for oil and gas development. This legislation, if it passes, will mean substantial additional funds for the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources for recreation, outdoor education and resource protection. Of particular importance will be funds available to support conservation of Vermont's many nongame species not specifically covered under other federal programs. Vermont's three congressional delegates support the legislation, and President Clinton is expected to sign it. The key will be to move the bill through the Senate in the face of competition from other important legislation, including a number of appropriations bills. We have our fingers crossed.

Otter Tracks

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