

## Field Trips

### (1) Boston: An Urban Ecosystem

**Trip Leader(s):** Eric Strauss, Boston College (strausse@bc.edu) and staff of the Urban Ecology Institute.

**Description:** Visit this historic city and see it as more than a large, sprawling metropolitan area. Boston is undergoing a transformation, fueled by the vision and energy of many collaborating groups, to improve the urban ecosystem, public health, and the quality of life of Boston's residents. Visit many of the parks, greenways, river corridors, and other open spaces that are distributed throughout the city, several of which form the famous "Emerald Necklace" as envisioned by pioneer landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. Well over 100 species of birds have been sighted in the Boston area, as well as many other species of wildlife. Bring binoculars.

**Travel Arrangements:** Vans and/or vehicles will leave the UMass. campus Sunday morning (8:30 AM) and return Sunday afternoon (4:30 PM).

**Min. and Max. Number of Participants:** At least 4 participants but no more than 12.

**Cost:** \$25 per person.

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### (2) The Open Spaces of Springfield

**Trip Leader(s):** David Bloniarz, U. S. Forest Service (dbloniarz@fs.fed.us).

**Description:** Plan to attend this visit to Springfield, Massachusetts and experience an urban forest, including greenways, parks, and other open spaces. We will travel through several of the neighborhoods of this mid-sized, industrialized city of 150,000 residents. The trip will include visiting several important open spaces of the city, which contribute to the quality of the urban ecosystem, as well add to the quality of life for Springfield's residents (human and wildlife, such as peregrine falcons). Additionally this trip will travel along the Mill River, which will showcase its various landscapes and habitats, ranging from large naturalized areas to the more urbanized channeled confluence at the Connecticut River. Finally, the trip will introduce the historical context of the city, which serves as the foundation of modern day Springfield, including its public open spaces, parks, greenways and other landscape features. Bring binoculars.

**Travel Arrangements:** Vans and/or vehicles will leave the UMass. campus Sunday morning (8:30 AM) and return Sunday afternoon (4:30 PM).

**Min. and Max. Number of Participants:** At least 4 participants but no more than 22.

**Cost:** \$25 per person.

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### **(3) Quabbin Reservoir and Watershed**

**Trip Leaders:** Steve DeStefano and Justin Compton, USGS Cooperative Research Unit (sdestef@nrc.umass.edu; compton@nrc.umass.edu).

**Description:** The Quabbin Reservoir and Watershed in central Massachusetts is a 186 square mile watershed that supplies metropolitan Boston with most of its domestic water. The Quabbin also plays an important role as wildlife habitat: moose, deer, bears, bobcats, fishers, beavers, otters, many species of raptors, dozens of songbirds, and large numbers of forest, wetland, and stream invertebrates and vertebrates can be found there. In addition to looking for wildlife, we will discuss the history, engineering, watershed management, and other aspects of this interesting and beautiful watershed. We will also visit large exclosures that are part of research being conducted on moose and deer browsing and its relationship to forest development and composition. Bring binoculars.

**Travel Arrangements:** Vans and/or vehicles will leave the UMass. campus Sunday morning at 8:30 and return Sunday afternoon by 4:30.

**Min. and Max. Number:** At least 4 participants but no more than 15.

**Cost:** \$25 per person.

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### **(4) Montague Plains WMA**

**Trip Leader:** Dave King, U. S. Forest Service (dking@fs.fed.us).

**Description:** The Montague Plains Wildlife Management Area contains a rare inland pitch pine-scrub oak barren, a globally threatened, fire-dependent habitat that harbors numerous declining, rare, or imperiled plant and animal species. This community has been greatly reduced in historical times, and continues to be threatened by development and fire exclusion. Pitch pine-scrub oak barrens require active management to maintain their distinctive ecological characteristics, as well as to control fuels accumulation that can threaten human habitation in the wildland-urban interface. We will visit the Montague Plains WMA during this field trip and discuss the ecology of pitch pine-scrub oak barrens, the need for active management of this system, and fuels reduction and fire risk to nearby human habitation. We will also visit study sites where research is being conducted on the effects of these habitat restoration and fuels reduction activities on songbirds, snakes, and native bees. Bring binoculars.

**Travel Arrangements:** We have a van with space for 6-7 people that will leave the UMass. campus at 9:00 AM Sunday morning and return by 4:00.

**Min. and Max. Number:** At least 4 participants but no more than 15.

**Cost:** \$25 per person.

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## **(5) Butterflies and Odonates of central Mass.**

**Trip Leader:** Dave Small, Department of Conservation and Recreation  
(dave@dhsml.net).

**Description:** The Pioneer Valley of central Massachusetts has a wide range of habitats and diverse communities of invertebrates. This trip will focus on butterflies and odonates (dragonflies and damselflies), led by a local expert who has many years experience identifying and working with these species. Be prepared to wade in shallow water and bring a collecting net if you have one, otherwise nets will be provided. Bring binoculars. Guidebooks will also be available.

**Travel Arrangements:** Car-pooling to local sites from UMass. campus at 8:30 and return by 2:30.

**Min. and Max. Number:** At least 4 participants but no more than 12.

**Cost:** \$25 per person.

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## **(6) Birds of central Massachusetts**

**Trip Leader:** To Be Announced

**Description:** Get up for an early morning trip to the diverse natural communities of the Pioneer Valley of central Massachusetts with a local expert for several hours of birdwatching. Bring binoculars; a spotting scope and bird guides will be available.

**Travel Arrangements:** Car-pooling to local sites from the UMass campus, time to be announced.

**Min. and Max. Number:** At least 4 participants but no more than 12.

**Cost:** \$25 per person.