



[amcberkshire.org](http://amcberkshire.org)  
[outdoors.org](http://outdoors.org)

Spring 2013



# BERKSHIRE EXCHANGE

FROM *the* CHAIR

## Enjoy Winter with the AMC...and Plan Ahead for Spring Happenings!

Hello everyone, and happy New Year! I'm pleased to be writing my first note as Berkshire Chapter Chair. I think it will be an exciting year, full of opportunities to get outside and explore, to get fit, and to learn about the beauty of nature all around us.

We've had some snow this year, and I'm happy to report that Notchview in Windsor has been open for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. I've also had the pleasure of leading a group on a snowshoe trip in Petersham, east of the Quabbin. We've had some very pretty days this winter, so I hope

you can take advantage of it by taking part in some of the many activities the AMC has to offer. You can easily find what's going on anywhere in the region by going to [outdoors.org](http://outdoors.org) and clicking in the "Get Outdoors" tab. And of course, you can also stay informed via the bimonthly *AMC Outdoors* magazine, our own *Berkshire Exchange*, and an email blast you can sign up for at [www.outdoors.org/membercenter](http://www.outdoors.org/membercenter).

On the business side, we re-elected our existing slate of officers, and have a new Training &

*continued on page 7*



1929-2013  
BERKSHIRE CHAPTER  
84 YEARS

## For Outdoor Skills and Leadership, Introducing Our New Training & Education Committee Chair

Please allow me to introduce myself as the newly appointed Berkshire Chapter Training & Education Chair. I have been a member of the AMC for about 12 years and an active outings leader for the AMC since 2003. I have volunteered as a caretaker at Upper Goose Pond for seven years and have served as an Instructor for the AMC's Mountain Leadership School and Outdoor Leadership programs. I have also taught Wilderness First Aid and Wilderness First Responder courses for SOLO.

My goals for the coming year are to provide additional training in different areas such as Leave No Trace and Map & Compass. I also would like to be more involved in supporting and developing leaders within our mountaineering and paddling committees. More importantly, I want to hear what your needs and wants are, so I can best support you. If you have any questions or ideas and would like to join the Training & Education Committee, you may contact me at [leadershiptraining@amcberkshire.org](mailto:leadershiptraining@amcberkshire.org). I'm looking forward to serving your needs. Thanks!

Respectfully,  
Wayne Rodrigues  
Training & Education Committee Chair

### THE CRAWFORD NOTCH CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

*see page 4*

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

*see page 5*

### OUTDOOR EDUCATION

*see page 6*

### THE NATURALIST SERIES AT NOBLE VIEW OUTDOOR CENTER

*see page 7*

**ANNUAL  
POTLUCK DINNER**  
**Saturday, March 23**

*see page 3*

# Marion Stoddart: The Work of 1000

Wednesday, March 27, 6:30 PM

Westfield Athenaeum, 6 Elm Street, Westfield, MA

Admission is free. Come meet Marion and others in the community, followed by the inspiring film about the power of advocacy. Afterward, Marion will speak about key leadership lessons she has learned in her 50 years as a grassroots advocate. Lastly, we'll have a Q&A discussion with our local community advocates and Marion. In the 1960s, the Nashua River in New Hampshire and central Massachusetts was one of the 10 most polluted in the country, clogged with multicolored, toxic sludge from nearby paper mills. Marion's efforts helped get the Massachusetts Clean Rivers Act passed so that companies weren't allowed to pollute rivers like the Nashua anymore. In the process, she won a United Nations award, was profiled in National Geographic, and had a widely-read children's book written about her. Her secret? An ordinary person can do extraordinary things when they refuse to give up. Thanks to Marion, children in the Nashua River Watershed and around the world have come to understand that one person can make a difference, even when the odds seem impossible.

For more information contact Sabine Prather  
(chapterchair@amcberkshire.org; 413-949-3914).

## Pioneer Valley Outdoor Fair

Saturday, April 27, Westfield State University

Join the Berkshire Chapter and other outdoor organizations for a day of varied outdoor activities, and information tables, at Scanlon Hall, Westfield State University. Waterfall walks, bike rides, family fun, fossil identification, Westfield River activities, and more. Other local participating outdoor associations include the Naturalist Club, Pioneer Valley Mineral Club, Cyclonauts, Mass Audubon, and Westfield River Watershed Association. See [amcberkshire.org](http://amcberkshire.org) for updates. For more information contact Gary Forish (forgary@comcast.net; 413-519-3251).

## Winter *by Janice Doubleday*

*Aprons of snow shroud the trunks of  
the biggest and smallest of forest trees.  
Flowing white veils adorn the tree stumps.*

*Some wearing white turbans,  
others, elfin hats.*

*The Hemlocks are laden.*

*Peace resides*

*but...for the deer who struggles to lift each hoof,*

*forced to eat bark without berry or the sweet tips of saplings.*

*Then...a whisper from above sends  
a cloud of snow drifting downward  
to frozen silence.*

*Sunshine*

*Such Peace,*

*For the earth to smuggle*

*bears to sleep*

*mice to huddle.*

*hikers to gather.*

## Berkshire Chapter Executive Committee

– 2013 –

### CHAPTER OFFICERS

**Chair:** Sabine Prather

(chapterchair@amcberkshire.org; 413-949-3914)

**Vice Chair:** *vacant*

**Treasurer:** Sonja Goodwin

(treasurer@amcberkshire.org; 413-534-4049)

**Secretary:** Nora Hanke

(secretary@amcberkshire.org; 413-527-8384)

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**Appalachian Trail Committee:**

Jim Pelletier

(at@amcberkshire.org; 413-454-4773)

**Berkshire County Representative:** *vacant*

**Berkshire Exchange Committee:**

**Chair/Publisher** – Jon Hanauer

(newsletter@amcberkshire.org; 413-568-0990)

**E-News Administrator** – David Jones

(enews-admin@amcberkshire.org)

**Canoe and Kayak Committee:**

Connie Peterson (paddling@amcberkshire.org)

**Conservation Committee:** *vacant*

**Family Programs:** *vacant*

**Membership Welcoming Committee:**

*vacant*

**Mountaineering Committee:**

Sarah Long

(mountaineering@amcberkshire.org; 845-235-3127)

**Noble View Committee:** Frank Evans

(FEvans6568@aol.com)

**Nominating Committee:** *vacant*

**Outings Committee:** Jon Hanauer

(outings@amcberkshire.org; 413-568-0990)

**Past Chair:** David Sauriol

(past-chair@amcberkshire.org)

**Public Relations Committee:**

Sabine Prather

(publicity@amcberkshire.org; 413-949-3914)

**Trails Committee:** Patrick Fletcher

(hiker6@comcast.net; 413-562-9863)

**Training and Education Committee:**

Wayne Rodrigues

(leadershiptraining@amcberkshire.org; 413-244-7376)

**Website Committee:**

**Chair/Webmaster** – Bob Bergstrom

(webmaster@amcberkshire.org)

**Content Editor** – *vacant*

**Young Members Committee:**

Paxton Berardy

(ymchair@amcberkshire.org; 860-758-7275)



## BERKSHIRE EXCHANGE

– March 2013 –

All issues of the Berkshire Exchange (back to 2003) can be downloaded at <http://amcberkshire.org/berkex/archives>

**Publisher:** Jon Hanauer (newsletter@amcberkshire.org; 413-568-0990)

**Editor:** Maureen Flanagan (berkexeditor@amcberkshire.org)

**Assistant Editor:** Gail Blackhall (proofreader@amcberkshire.org)

**E-Newsletter Administrator:**

David Jones (enews-admin@amcberkshire.org; 413-320-1617)

**Submissions:** newsletter@amcberkshire.org;

Berkshire Exchange, 29 Atwater Street, Westfield, MA 01085-1541

**Address Changes & Delivery Preferences:**

[www.outdoors.org/membercenter](http://www.outdoors.org/membercenter); 800-372-1758;

Appalachian Mountain Club, 5 Joy Street, Boston, MA 02108

**Title Image:** photo by Jon Hanauer

Westfield River



## Other Helpful Contacts

**Membership in a Bottle:** Chris Ryan

(geolopes@comcast.net; 413-549-4124)

**Regional Director:** Sharon Foster

(regionaldirector@amcberkshire.org)

**Regional Trails Coordinator:** *vacant*

**Tuesday Hiking:** Irene Lamson

(ilamson@comcast.net; 413-584-6644)

Save the Date! All Are Welcome!

# AMC Berkshire Chapter Annual Potluck Dinner

Saturday, March 23, 6:00 p.m.

Florence Civic Center, 90 Park Street, Florence, MA

Help us welcome new, returning, and prospective members! Enjoy a delicious potluck dinner and an exciting program presented by our guest speaker, Nick Shaw.

Meet new and old friends, network with Committee Chairs, and learn how you can join in and get involved. We'll have trip leaders present, and committee tables to show members and visitors alike where we've been, and how to get out on the trails, rivers, lakes, and mountains around us. There will also be folks from the Appalachian Trail Committee and Noble View Outdoor Center to talk about the fun of getting engaged with trail work and outdoor education. Bring along any friends who might like to know more about the AMC.

We'll enjoy the historic setting of the Florence Civic Center, ideally getting a chance to socialize outdoors on the lovely wrap-around porch.

Please bring a dish to share with 6–8 people. Last name A–C, salad; D–M, dessert; N–S, casserole; T–Z, appetizer.

**It's a wonderful event for all!**

For more info, please contact Sabine Prather  
at 413-949-3914 or  
[chapterchair@amcberkshire.org](mailto:chapterchair@amcberkshire.org).

## *Our Region's Highlands*

Nick Shaw, an Environmental Science instructor in Amherst, will offer a presentation called "On Top of New England: A Portrait of the Hills." He spent a decade researching and creating a photographic portrait of our region's highlands that would weave together their natural and cultural histories.

He will narrate the multimedia show, which explores the geography, ecology, and cultural history of the Taconic, Green, and White Mountains, in addition to the mountains of Maine. The cultural history explores the colonial, Romantic, and modern periods of mountain history in New England with an emphasis on 20th century mountain conservation. Afterward, we can discuss conservation issues further.

# Citizen Science: the Crawford Notch Christmas Bird Count

by Nora E. Hanke

Do you enjoy being out in the woods during winter? Can you winter hike, snowshoe or cross-country ski? Do you love to bird watch?

On the last Saturday before Christmas for the past eight years, a hardy few birders have been meeting at the AMC Highland Center in Crawford Notch, NH. We are directed by Craig Repasz from Connecticut, who founded the annual Crawford Notch Christmas Bird Count.

Christmas Bird Counts began 113 years ago and now include count sites in North, Central, and South America. Since 2011, there has even been a site in Cuba!

The CBC was first proposed in 1900 as an alternative to Christmas-time shooting competitions which were designed to see who could kill the most animals and birds. Nowadays, the goal of the counts is to peacefully provide longitudinal data about bird populations.

The National Audubon Society has this to say about the CBC:

*From December 14 through January 5 tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas take part in an adventure that has become a family tradition among generations. Families and students, birders and scientists, armed with binoculars, bird guides and checklists go out on an annual mission—often before dawn. For over one hundred years, the desire to both make a difference and to experience the beauty of nature has driven dedicated people to leave the comfort of a warm house during the Holiday season.*

*Each of the citizen scientists who annually braves snow, wind, or rain, to take part in the Christmas Bird Count makes an enormous contribution to conservation. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations, and to help guide conservation action.*

*From feeder-watchers and field observers to count compilers and regional editors, everyone who takes part in the Christmas Bird Count does it for love of birds and the excitement of friendly competition—and with the knowledge that their efforts are making a difference for science and bird conservation.*

For the Crawford Notch CBC, one of 21 sites in New Hampshire alone, Craig arrives a few days in advance of count day to scout the trails for their conditions and to determine where it is most crucial to send his counters. Depending on the weather and the surface, the mode of travel is winter boots with crampons, snowshoes, or cross-country skis.

Some of the volunteers he has enticed to this circle are locals like Leslie Bergum, who typically covers the Route 302 corridor. (The trail counters are always in awe of Leslie's feeder bird numbers!) Others travel from hours away to participate. For example, I live in western Mass., near Northampton—which is spoiled for birders able and willing to walk around, and drive around, for their count day.

There are 34 count circles in all of Massachusetts, and 7 in western Mass. But, since the Whites became a place from which to retreat from my miserable life in urban Rhode Island in the mid 1990s, I was thrilled to find there is a count circle in New Hampshire that allows me to combine my love of mountain recreation with birding, while contributing to citizen science. For me, the annual Crawford Notch CBC is the highlight of the year!

So far, in five years of involvement, I have covered Mts. Willey and Field (on snowshoes), the Zealand road (on skis), Bretton Woods cross-country trails (on skis), and Mts. Pierce and Jackson (in boots with "traction devices", as we call them!).

My first year there it was bitterly cold, and there'd been a big snowstorm the day before. Craig sent me out in hopes I'd find a Black-backed Woodpecker.

Looking and listening hard all day, I counted only three birds total! They were Blue Jays and Black-capped Chickadees (not even Gray Jays and Boreal Chickadees, which are amongst the target boreal species for this circle). That day I kept thinking I was hearing a bird's whistle and it took an hour or two to figure out that it was my own wheezing, from the cold! I fell many times in the deep snow, and my water bottle insulator zipper froze shut, so I was both hungry and thirsty when I slumped into the lodge in the late afternoon. I was just glad to make it back safe and sound to the Highland Center that year.

The next year's weather was more ho-hum, and I remember identifying some fly-over Cedar Waxwings as well as vocal American Robins, both species feeding on the mountain ash berries near the river. One recent year, the counter for that route caught a small flock of Snow Buntings at the start of the Zealand road. Leslie found Snow Buntings in the roads department service area next to Route 302 in 2011.

Three years ago, I didn't enjoy the Bretton Woods cross-country trails route as much, as it was not a wilderness route. And I know the cross-country racers in their Lycra must have wondered what those slowpokes in wide (to them) skis were doing on their trails. But the ski from the Highland Center to the Bretton Woods trails, and back, was free of any madding crowds.

The last two years, due to lack of snow on count day, my friend Al Grimstad, from southern New Hampshire, and I have hiked

the Mts. Pierce and Jackson route on the east side of Route 302. It starts out along Crawford Path and the rough U-shaped route finishes a little south of the Highland Center.

The base of Crawford Path at Route 302 has woods where we hope to find species such as Golden-crowned Kinglets, Pine Siskins, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, and White- and Red-breasted Nuthatches. It ascends through habitat conducive to species including Brown Creepers, Dark-eyed Juncos, and both winter Grosbeaks (Pine and Evening). The areas closer to the summits can yield Boreal Chickadees ("Brown-capped" Chickadees), White-winged Crossbills, and Spruce Grouse. It would also be hard to miss the bold and gregarious Gray Jay that frequents the area surrounding Mizpah Hut year round.

Many count day observations are purely auditory. For example, the raucous call of the Common Raven, the high pitched, single note from a Brown Creeper, the paired high pitched call of the Kinglets, and the horse-in-the-trees calls of the Robin.

The Boreal Chickadee sounds just a little different from the more southerly Black-capped. Its voice has a harshness or wheezy quality, and the "dee dee" notes are not repeated.

A bird can be counted if it is considered to be positively identified by sight, sound, or fresh sign, which can include definitive tracks or fresh scat. For example, the last two years Al and I have been able to add Spruce Grouse to our route's list on the basis of grouse tracks in fresh snow (snow falling during the hike), in suitable, high-elevation spruce habitat, and fresh (not frozen!) grouse scat in the same, suitable habitat.

I have also been able to take a few nice pictures, such as the Boreal Chickadee and Gray Jay. Unfortunately, we could not get pictures of some exciting finds, such as the White-winged Crossbill who was singing his



**Boreal Chickadee** photo by Nora Hanke

heart out on the trail approaching Mt. Pierce in 2011, or the three Pine Grosbeaks foraging in the top of tall spruces this year.

In the 113th CBC, as we started our route Al grumbled about not skiing for the second year in a row in 2012. He informed me the day was a miserable one when we were ascending the Crawford Path. But then we found the grosbeaks, and later a family of three Gray Jays descended on us just after we found Boreal Chickadees. Different Gray Jays met us at Mizpah, and descending the slopes of Jackson a single one also shared the trail with us for a few minutes. By the time we were back at the road just before dark, Al was telling me that we needed to remember the time it took us from the hut to the road, “for next year.”

Meanwhile, the other Crawford Notch counters were also returning, and when we assembled to review our results their additional species included Wild Turkeys, Common Redpolls, and a lone Canada Goose. So far in this count circle’s eight-year history, a Black-



**Gray Jay** photo by Nora Hanke

backed Woodpecker has been observed only once.

The days prior to and following count day, additional species can be added as “count week,” and this year included Leslie’s observations of a Northern Shrike near a bird feeder (and she managed to photograph it).

Non-bird species observed included red squirrels, and when searching a river bank the next day I saw a mink dragging off a still-alive muskrat.

There are also summertime opportunities to combine mountain sport and birding with citizen science. I can recommend in particular the Vermont Center for Ecostudies Mountain Birdwatch / Bicknell’s Thrush Survey. But be warned: despite the warmer weather (this event occurs in June), there is a protocol which is challenging both physically and mentally. To give you a flavor for the physical element of challenge: count sites, which are predetermined by the VCE, are often miles away from a trailhead, and the observations must start before dawn and be completed by 8 a.m.!

Nevertheless, I for one am excited to participate again in the 2013 Crawford Notch CBC, where I still hope to find a Black-backed Woodpecker, and to try again to comply with the Mountain Birdwatch protocol.

If you are interested in challenging yourself in these citizen science projects, you can learn more about the 2013 Bicknell’s Thrush survey: read about it online at <http://www.vtecostudies.org/MBW> or get in touch with Judith Scarl at [info@vtecostudies.org](mailto:info@vtecostudies.org).

If you might like to join the Crawford Notch CBC, Craig Repasz can be contacted at [crepasz@hotmail.com](mailto:crepasz@hotmail.com).

---

## – VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES –

### **VOLUNTEER FOR THE BERKSHIRE CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

*If you’d like to be part of the top level of Berkshire Chapter leadership and you’re interested in one of these exciting positions, or would like to know more, please contact Sabine Prather at 413-949-3914 or [chapterchair@amcberkshire.org](mailto:chapterchair@amcberkshire.org).*

#### **Chapter Vice Chair**

The Chapter Vice Chair works with the Chapter Chair to develop goals and establish benchmarks to achieve these goals. The Vice Chair attends (and represents our Chapter in the Chair’s absence) the AMC-wide Chapters Committee meetings. The Vice Chair would be nominated to become Chapter Chair at the end of the current Chapter Chair’s two-year term.

#### **Family Programs Chair**

Do you enjoy getting outside with your family? Would you like to share your love of the outdoors and the excitement of introducing children to new adventures in the natural world? Then consider becoming involved with Family Programs. We are looking for someone with energy and enthusiasm to take on this role and develop family-friendly outings and activities. Please contact Sabine Prather.

#### **Membership Welcoming Committee Chair**

Organizing events is especially effective in introducing new and prospective members to our chapter and the AMC. Help us welcome new members and encourage them (as well as the general public) to join us in all our activities. Please contact Sabine Prather.

#### **Nominating Committee Chair**

We are looking for someone to assist our Chapter’s committees in identifying and mentoring qualified individuals for leadership roles in the Berkshire Chapter. This position is vital to the continuity of Chapter leadership. We need someone who has, or is willing to develop, a broad knowledge of our Chapter and its members, and who would enjoy helping to identify talented members and leaders and encouraging them to become more involved. Please contact Sabine Prather.

#### **Outings Committee Co-Chair**

Encourage Chapter Outings leaders to post events so members can have activity options (hiking, backpacking, biking, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing, and more) every weekend. Get new leaders approved with our Training & Education Committee. Please contact Jon Hanauer at 413-568-0990 or [outings@amcberkshire.org](mailto:outings@amcberkshire.org).

#### **Young Members Committee Chair**

Young Members activities target adults in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, but are always open to everyone. Please contact Sabine Prather.

# - OUTDOOR EDUCATION -

## **Leadership Training, Berkshire/Worcester Chapters**

*Prindle Pond Conference Center, Charlton, MA*

*Saturday–Sunday, April 13–14*

Whether you'd like to become a Chapter leader or just want to improve your outdoor skills, you're invited to attend. Training emphasizes group dynamics, leaders' responsibilities, trip planning and management, weather emergencies, incident/accident scene control, leader awareness, and decision-making. Fee of \$40 includes 2-day training, materials and meals. Overnight lodging available for \$20 per night. Advance payment requested. Existing leaders attend at no charge.

Leader: Wayne Rodrigues ([laughingwildwolf@yahoo.com](mailto:laughingwildwolf@yahoo.com); 413-244-7376).

Registrar: Deb Herlihy ([debora\\_herlihy@yahoo.com](mailto:debora_herlihy@yahoo.com))

## **SOLO Wilderness First Aid Training**

*Noble View Outdoor Center, Russell, MA*

*Two weekends offered: March 23–24 and May 18–19*

Improve your skills and increase your confidence. Learn accident scene management and patient care at western Massachusetts' Noble View Outdoor Center ([nobleviewoutdoorcenter.org](http://nobleviewoutdoorcenter.org)). Standard first aid practices are generally based on the assumption that help will arrive soon and the patient will be out of your hands and at the hospital in under an hour. Accidents can and do happen, and all too often members of a group are not capable of dealing with the emergency. Not only does this lead to improper care of the patient, but it also endangers the entire group. WFA addresses the medical and logistical issues that arise where there is no ambulance, no shelter from the elements, your supplies are few, and the length of your wait for help is unknown. Lectures and discussions are supplemented by hands-on scenarios. An emphasis on long-term care and evacuation complications in the backcountry make this course unique. Fee of \$150 with optional lodging available. Subsidy available for active Berkshire Chapter leaders. All are welcome: AMC members as well as members of the general public.

Contact Gary Forish (413-572-4501 before 8 PM; [forgary@comcast.net](mailto:forgary@comcast.net))

## **SOLO Wilderness First Responder Training**

*Noble View Outdoor Center, Russell, MA, May 30 – June 6*

The WFR course is a comprehensive and in-depth look at the standards and skills of dealing with response and assessment, musculoskeletal injuries, soft tissue injuries, environmental and medical emergencies, and survival skills. Although these appear to be the same basic topics covered in the two-day WFA course, they are covered far more extensively, and there is much more hands-on practice. Additional topics, such as CPR, are also included. Fee of \$750 includes lodging.

Contact Gary Forish (413-519-3251 before 8 PM; [forgary@comcast.net](mailto:forgary@comcast.net))

## **Mountain Leadership School with Wilderness First Aid**

*Highland Center at Crawford Notch, NH, June 10–16*

Mountain Leadership School (MLS) is a five-day wilderness leadership training program designed to help you lead groups with minimal impact in the backcountry. Now in its 6th decade, this program is staffed by senior AMC volunteers who have a wide variety of backcountry knowledge and experience. This package adds a 2-day, Wilderness First Aid course prior to MLS. Participants that successfully complete the course work will be issued a WFA certification valid for 2 years. Fee is \$660 (\$745 for non-members).

Contact AMC Reservations (603-466-2727 Monday–Saturday 9 AM – 5 PM; [amclodging@outdoors.org](mailto:amclodging@outdoors.org))

## **Mountain Leadership School for Day Hike Leaders**

*Highland Center at Crawford Notch, NH, August 7–11*

Mountain Leadership School (MLS) for Day Hike Leaders is an experiential outdoor leadership training program that trains participants to lead high quality, safety-focused excursions with minimal impact on the backcountry. This session focuses on the needs of those outdoor leaders who primarily lead day hikes. For 50 years, we have continually refined the MLS core curriculum to meet current needs while incorporating our rich history. The day hike excursions range from 5-8 miles per day and cover challenging terrain in the White Mountains. Each evening the group returns to the comfort of the Shapleigh Bunk House at the Highland Center in Crawford Notch to enjoy a hearty dinner at the Highland Center and prepare for the next day's learning adventure. Fee is \$448 (\$506 for non-members).

Contact AMC Reservations (603-466-2727 Monday–Saturday 9 AM – 5 PM; [amclodging@outdoors.org](mailto:amclodging@outdoors.org))

# ***The Naturalist Series at Noble View Outdoor Center***

**Vernal Pools** • Friday, April 12, 9 AM – 1 PM

Life begins after winter. Late winter and early spring finds an abrupt flurry of activity in the small forest wetlands known as vernal pools. Often small and easily overlooked, the small size and serenity of the pools' surface belies the remarkable diversity and sheer number of living organisms. We will take a short walk with Tom Tying, professional naturalist and Professor of Environmental Science at Berkshire Community College, to visit a couple of Noble View's vernal pools. We'll take a close look at the amphibians that thrive in these habitats. Donation of \$5. Bring a bag lunch and enjoy the 50-mile view at Noble View!

For more information and to register contact Gary Forish (forgary@comcast.net; 413-519-3251).

**Wild Flower Search and Identification** • Saturday, May 11, 10 AM – 12 PM

Did you always want to know the name of that beautiful shy flower peeking out from under the pine needles? Join us for search and ID hike. Young children invited. We'll be guided by Nancy Condon, Naturalist, NaturePods; and Laura Stinnette, NVOC.

For more information and to register contact Gary Forish (forgary@comcast.net; 413-519-3251).

**Green Thugs in Our Woodlands: Invasive Plants Impacting Native Habitats**

Saturday, June 15, 10 AM – 12 PM

Come learn about some common invasive plants in our area, how to identify them, their ecological impact, and how to get rid of them safely. We'll be guided by Julie Richburg, Regional Ecologist, The Trustees of Reservations

For more information and to register contact Gary Forish (forgary@comcast.net; 413-519-3251).

– [www.nobleviewoutdoorcenter.org](http://www.nobleviewoutdoorcenter.org) –

## ***Hey! Are You Still Receiving the BERKSHIRE EXCHANGE in the U.S. Mail?***

*Berkshire Exchange* Online!!

If you're a Berkshire Chapter member, you have the unique opportunity to contribute to conservation, and our budget, by signing up to receive the *Berkshire Exchange* electronically! Just go to [www.outdoors.org/membercenter](http://www.outdoors.org/membercenter), sign in and update your Chapter Newsletter Preferences. It's that easy!

Also, you'll get your *Berkshire Exchange* up to 2 weeks earlier.

What are you waiting for? Do it now!

### **From the Chair, continued from page 1**

Education Chair who will help new trip leaders get certified and trained so we'll have more trips. Everyone is welcome to join us for Executive Committee meetings, which are posted on our snazzy, newly renovated website at [amcberkshire.org](http://amcberkshire.org). You might want to get involved in an easier way by being a member-at-large and seeing what we do before committing to a particular committee or activity. We could use some conservationists, bicyclists, and outing organizers, if you're interested!

Additionally, we're beginning to plan our work on the Appalachian Trail and the New England Scenic Trail, as well as summer paddling trips, mountaineering outings, and social and conservation events. Look for updates on how we'll make it easier for everyone to enjoy the New England countryside.

Coming up, save the date for our Annual Potluck, this year in Florence on Saturday, March 23; more info on page 3. We also have a conservation event coming up in Westfield on Wednesday, March 27: Marion

Stoddart and the rejuvenation of the Nashua River (see page 2).

A collaborative outdoors fair will be at Westfield State University's Scanlon Hall on Saturday, April 27. The AMC is just one of the organizations involved—you can check out all kinds of hiking, biking, natural history, geological, and paddling organizations, and join a group for a short talk or hike as well.

Keep checking the web for more information and updates.

Respectfully,  
Sabine Prather  
Berkshire Chapter Chair  
[chapterchair@amcberkshire.org](mailto:chapterchair@amcberkshire.org)

**Porter Dickinson and Edith Libby, November, 1962. Porter Dickinson was one of the original Berkshire Chapter members in 1929. Edith Libby was Chapter Chair, 1963-1964.**

*photo submitted by Gary Forish*



**BERKSHIRE EXCHANGE**  
Spring 2013

**Berkshire Exchange**  
Appalachian Mountain Club  
5 Joy Street  
Boston, MA 02108

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
TIGERPRESS