

DECEMBER 2018

HALIFAX NEWS

VERNAL POOL MONITORING



Last May I went to a seminar on vernal pool monitoring, offered at the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum up on Hogback Mountain overlooking Halifax. The presenter from the Vermont Center for Ecostudies described these seasonal woodland pools that provide breeding grounds for wood frogs, three kinds of salamanders (Spotted [pictured in our basement 2017], Blue-spotted, Jefferson), and fairy shrimp (photos at right: Vt Center for Ecostudies). Vernal pools

dry up in summer, so animals that breed in them must mature quickly and live on land as adults. The creatures that rely on vernal pools have an advantage in that their breeding pool does not support predatory fish -- unlike streams, lakes, and permanent ponds or wetlands. The speaker said they were looking for Citizen Scientists to help monitor Vermont's vernal pools.

This fall I signed up to find and monitor a vernal pool. I said I did not have one of my own that I knew of. I was sent a link to a map of some 5,000 vernal pools tentatively identified and painstakingly mapped to GPS coordinates during a 5-year project 2009-2013 -- see this site: <http://aevt.maps.arcgis.com> and choose Vernal Pool Mapping Pool 2013. I saw there were a few vernal pools in Halifax but none in our northwest corner of the Town, so I continued up

Shearer Hill Road into Wilmington where my sisters and I have some property. Was I surprised to find my own name and old Texas address there! I'd given consent in 2013 for this very project. And there were two pools, identified as SFP745 and SFP746.



A couple weeks later, the coordinator, Alex Wells, came down from Norwich VT to tramp around in the rain on Shearer Hill so we could find and map one of the pools (size; plants in it; trees overhanging it) and install a Hobo temperature monitor on a PVC pipe at the bottom of the middle of it (pictured left). We set the Hobo to record the temperature every hour starting March 1, 2019. The recorded data can be transmitted back to Ecostudies. As long as the Hobo is underwater, the temperature fluctuates moderately, compared to air temps. As soon as the Hobo is exposed to the air, the daily

variations in temperature become much greater, so this change identifies when the pool dries up. I asked to be partnered with another alumn of the vernal pool seminar, and I asked whether we could monitor more than one pool. We could!

I connected with my partner, Grace, and showed her the Shearer Hill pool one day. Then I contacted Sue Kelly up on Jolly Hill about a vernal pool she has right here in Halifax. Grace and I planned to visit Sue Kelly's pool with Alex Wells, but Grace was unable to come after all. So, I met Alex Wells at the appointed day and time, Sue showed us a map of the mountain on which the pool was located, and she described the terrain with its hills and vales. She emphasized taking the trail that zigzagged rather than trying to beeline it to the pool. I asked what the little hatch marks were here and there on her map -- were those bogs? Oh, no!, said Sue, those are ledges. (Uh-oh.) But she showed us the trailhead, described its general path through the woods, and we traipsed down Sue's wooded path then up and up and up her mountain to the very top. There we found a pool about 100 feet from the one on the map that we were looking for, so Alex gave it a new name. We set up a Hobo in the pool and mapped its characteristics. Then we came back down off the mountain -- via a *different* route, you might say, that nonetheless eventually came out at Sue's house. Phew. And I only fell once.

Next spring Grace and I will return to our two pools to listen for the mating calls of the wood frogs, and later to look for wood frog and salamander egg masses. We are Citizen Scientists! - Laurel Copeland, Halifax, Vermont





HUNTERS' SUPPER with 38 pies and 8 turkeys took place in the Halifax Community Hall on the chilly but clear Saturday, November 10th. An energetic crew cooked the birds at their homes, brought them to the Hall, helped the B&S Gang cook the fixings (yes, Kim, you are now a member of the B&S Gang: welcome to Halifax!), and served hungry hunters for two hours straight. Mmmmm!!!



The Hall painting job was finished in time for the Hunters' Supper on November 10, 2018. Later in November Green Insolutions blew cellulose insulation into the walls. Very cozy!

NEWSLETTER NEWS. Got a great Halifax story? Write it up and send it over! Send your story to Joan at JWCinVt@gmail.com (802.368.7733) and/or Laurel at LaurelACopeland@gmail.com.

TOWN REPORT

November was all about snow! We had snow in early November, and we boy oh boy did we have snow in late November! Trees went down all over, on roads, on driveways, on wires. Our power was out from Monday night until Saturday as dozens of trucks ranged all over central southern Vermont repairing lines and poles. Hope your generator was running and your wood fires were burning!



The Town and Village filled with power company trucks and men from as far away as NY, Indiana and Missouri, working to restore power after the heavy wet snowstorm as the month wound down.



Snow Nov 9th - Halifax VT



Trees across the road all over Town from the blizzard. Nov. 26-27, 2018.



Snow Nov 27th - Halifax VT

✂ **COMMUNITY CLUB** ✂ With the devastation of this latest snowstorm and so very many people without power for so many days....I would like to see the Community Hall have a large enough generator to run the two propane furnaces and make it so the hall could be used as "the place of refuge" for townspeople to go for warmth, electricity to charge phones and other devices of today, and a warm meal. Maybe even a place to sleep, if needed. A generator large enough to do that is beyond our means right now after all the other updates to the building, BUT this is something I feel we need to work towards in the future. - Joan Courser



JOAN'S SIGHTINGS

Lots and lots of winter birds at the feeders in November! Chickadees, Goldfinch, Sparrows, too many Bluejays, Grosbeaks, Cardinals, Mourning Doves, saw one Red-Winged Blackbird, and oh, so many Juncos, Red-Bellied Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, and Titmice, and at one time lots of Starlings. They seem to be gone now, and 22 Wild Turkey come visiting each day, twice a day!

Bill Dame reported many Grosbeaks and Purple Finch. Told him he could share the Purple Finch; soon after talking with him I saw a few at my place, but they did not stay: must be they like it up on the hill better!

Laurel has been watched by a barred owl and a large housecat this past month. She also spotted a pretty white ermine (stoat) with the characteristic black-tip tail in the driveway. Meanwhile, the grey and red squirrels are competing with the foxes, turkeys and deer for whatever is out in the field on Hanson Road.

Send me your sightings: jwcinvt@gmail.com-- Joan Courser



(Photos: Laurel Copeland)



Tai Chi and Gentle Yoga at the Community Hall will resume in January. Tai chi contact: Seth 802-490-4294. Yoga contact: PenfieldChester@gmail.com.

Halifax Community Club will meet and enjoy dinner together (Dutch treat) at New England House on December 19, 2018, at 5:30 pm. Contact: LaurelACopeland@gmail.com or 368-7097. HCC documents: <http://czresearch.com/halifax/>

SENIOR MEAL – Friday, December 21 will be the next Senior meal in Halifax. We serve at 12 o'clock noon in the Community Hall at 20 Brook Road, West Halifax. The blizzard did us in last month! Such a pity. Menu: Turkey pot pie, potatoes, veggies, rolls and dessert. Hopefully the weather will be better this month. All are welcome. Let us know you are coming! It's much appreciated. Please call Joan at **802-368-7733**.

FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS

On 11/3, 12 men responded to a motor vehicle accident on Collins Road. A car went into a home. Someone missed a curve, went off the road and struck the dwelling. No injuries to anyone and no damage to home, but it was a rude awakening to the people sound asleep in the house!

On 11/7, nine men and one truck responded to a motor vehicle off the road. Intersection of Green River Rd. and Brook Rd.

On 11/10, two men and one truck responded to Amidon Rd. for a lady that fell from a horse. Transported by ambulance to hospital.

On 11/16, seven men and two trucks responded to a propane truck rollover in the Thomas Hill area. It took two wreckers to get it out. No propane or fuel leaks, thankfully. No injuries. Except to the truck!

On 11/24, two men responded to a fire alarm on Collins Road. No fire. Smoke from fireplace.

On 11/27, two men and one truck responded to a mutual aid call in Colrain, MA, for a chimney fire.

On 11/27, two men and one truck responded to a call of a tree on wires burning on Rte. 112. Never did locate any wires in road.

The Vermont Phoenix

December 1948

- 70 years ago -

SOUTH HALIFAX

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Pratt spent Christmas with her son, Earl Cardwell, and family in Greenfield, Mass. In the evening they entertained 50 guests at a Christmas party in their home.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Lively and little son of Greenfield, Mass., and Misses Claire and Janet Hebard of Springfield, Mass., and Greenfield, Mass., respectively, spent Sunday with their parents. Mr. and Mrs. Emory Hebard, and brother, Roswell Hebard. A dinner party and Christmas tree were enjoyed during the day.

Mr. and Mrs. Burton May of Templeton, Mass., spent Sunday with his father, Fred May.

Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Whitcomb and granddaughter of Gardner, Mass., visited their cousin, Mrs. Julia May, recently.

Floyd Rafus is fitting and installing drinking cups and milking-machine vacuum lines at the Hebard Farm.

Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Dean entertained their children and grandchildren on Christmas Day. A gift hunt was enjoyed among the small spruce trees in the yard. A gaily lighted tree in the yard has shone night and morning the past two weeks.

Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Harris and daughter, Helen, entertained Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Starkey of Shelburne Falls, Mass., at a party Christmas Eve. On Sunday Mr. and Mrs. Harris and daughter were entertained in Shelburne Falls at the home of Mrs. Harris' sister at a Christmas party.

Miss Bernice Burnett has been spending a few days with her sister and family in Wilmington.

Ralph Woods of Wilmington has been spending a few days with his grandparents.

Mr. and Mrs. Archie Burnett and Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Burnett and daughters attended a Christmas party Sunday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Woods in Wilmington.

Valley School will re-open Monday, Jan. 3, after a two-week vacation.

Miss Corrine Stone, teacher at "Algiers," has been spending a vacation with her parents.

Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Stone are living in their new house at his father's farm.

There will be a home demonstration meeting Jan. 4, at the home of the president, Mrs. Miner.

SOUTH HALIFAX

Mrs. Litchfield Entertains Women.

Nine members of the Home Demonstration Group met at "Makepeace Farm," home of Mrs. Edmund Litchfield, Tuesday, Dec. 7. After dinner Major Bliss gave a talk on nutrition and the world situation.

Miss Alice Stone returned to her home Thursday after spending the summer in Conway, Mass.

Alice McKinnon is ill with chicken pox.

JACKSONVILLE

Christmas was observed in the Jacksonville church Sunday morning with special music by the choir, in which Lucille Allard had the solo part. Rev. Mr. Nelson told a Christmas story to the children. Children from Mrs. Butterfield's grammar room sang Christmas carols before the service. The church was decorated with evergreen branches and a tree from which the children will receive gifts after exercises in the church at 7:30 p. m. this evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Willard and children, Judith and James, came Saturday from Clayton, N. Y., to spend the week and Christmas with relatives here and in Brattleboro.

Mrs. E. A. Temple has closed her home and gone to spend the winter with her son, Albert Temple, and family in Greenfield, Mass.

Evalyn Bemis, Emily Allard and Myron Lyman, students at the University of Vermont, are home for a two-week vacation.

Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Stone and little daughter, who had been living with her parents. Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Morse, moved Sunday to the new house which Floyd Stone has been building for them.

Mrs. Burton Morse was hostess to members of her sewing club Friday evening. A Christmas tree held gifts for each and a party followed.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bartlett of East Bridgewater, Mass., left today to spend Christmas with their son, Harry Bartlett, and family in Chicago.

A short program of recitations by the children, selections by the choir and chorus, singing of Christmas carols was given in the Jacksonville church Tuesday evening, after which gifts were distributed from a tree. Decorations for the tree were made by the children in Sunday School.

A special meeting of North River Grange was held Monday evening for a Christmas party, program and tree.

A family gathering of 25 children, grandchildren and two great-grandchildren of Mrs. Archie Morse met Sunday night at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Verne Stone, for a Christmas party and tree. Refreshments were served.

Thomas Roughton, who has been spending a few days of his vacation from the University of Vermont at the Moody farm, left Wednesday to stay the rest of the time with his parents in New York.

The community tree sponsored by the Legion has been set up in the usual place at the intersection of the roads and was lighted Tuesday night for the first time.

The Vermont Phoenix

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A GIFT TO OURSELVES

The Christmas tree that had been brought in from the pasture and set down in the midst of all the clutter in the children's catch-all room looked a little like forcing the season. Outside the ground was bare and brown. The air was filled with fog and drizzle.

But in the eyes of the two youngsters pawing through the ornament box there was not only the true excitement of the Christmas season but enough to make up for any lack of snow or the muffled white sounds of winter.

As the tree took on its silver and red and white trimmings we began to lose ourselves in the smaller world that belongs to children and which is the perennial preserver of the basic values that get squeezed out of so much of the world inhabited by grown-ups.

Unfearful of the future, the children live the moment fully. As the two of them shook the few packages that had arrived from relatives one realized that in spite of all the communication of hate throughout the world, the communication lines of affection and trust are still carrying their valuable freight.

The gifts by which distance between family branches is overcome, and affection may be passed on to each new generation of the youngest members, become more than symbols when one watches the youngsters on the receiving end. Something selected to please a child has kept alive someone's desire to communicate with the world of children.

For as we watched them finish the tree off with their version of painted pine cones we moved again into the world of clear-cut values—of trust, and love and honesty, of faith in the fairness of humans and response to the mysteries of being alive.

However we do it—we adults—we need more frequently to cherish for ourselves those civilizing values which somehow we manage to pass on to our children and forget to pass around among each other.

There haven't been many years as important as this one for looking into our hearts for the sake of the human race. To share in a child's Christmas, which is everybody's privilege in one way or another, is sharing more than the pleasure of an occasion:

I S H

All have pretty well recovered from the shock of the election outcome and have regained their sleep lost while listening on the radio election night. The result of town and state elections pleased about everybody but the women were disappointed not to have Dewey for president on account of Mrs. Dewey, who they believe would have been willing to disclose a little White House news for other women to enjoy.

~ C. Lancaster, Halifax
Historical Society

News from
Bygone Days

MERRY CHRISTMAS and warm wishes for a healthy & happy 2019!!!!

Pond maintenance. Nov. 2018. Halifax VT.



NEWSLETTER
P.O. Box 27
West Halifax, VT 05358

Halifax News

DECEMBER 2018



Is this the last of the fall foliage? A 3-inch tall maple, surrounded by orange and white fungi, sported red leaves in the hollow of a tree in early November.

A crew from New York uses a cherry-picker to chainsaw branches impinging on power lines on Hanson Road Friday night. I gave them cookies and clementines.



High winds in early November toppled trees in Halifax VT

