

What Do I Do With All My Junk?

So, what do you do with the old set of glassware that sits in a box in your basement? What about the "great" Christmas gift of a cow look-a-like cookie jar from Aunt Hilda? Or even those rolls of bubble wrap from your recent move? Well you could throw everything in the dumpster and never think about that stuff again. But that wouldn't be very "green" of you; with landfill space at a premium and the bubble wrap outliving your great grandchildren. You could try a yard sale on a Saturday morning in spring, put up the signs, move everything out onto your front yard, and at the end of the day, that cookie jar is still staring you in the face. Now there is a third option.

In late 2003 a new organization formed up calling itself "Freecycle™." This is a non-profit organization that started in Arizona and has spread worldwide. The major goals of the organization are to keep items out of landfills and to help foster a sense of local community amongst its users.

There are over 3900 member groups formed across the globe and over 3 million individual members. There are several groups formed within Connecticut with one of the largest based out of the New Haven area.

Freecycle™ is an e-mail list



that is formed by voluntary sign-ups. All groups in CT are formed as Yahoo® user groups. Go to www.freecycle.org to locate groups in your area. You can sign up to receive a daily e-mail listing of items. All members are eligible to post items they have and want to give away or post for items they are looking for. The New Haven group asks new members to post some items "for Offer" prior to any "Wanted" posts.

When an e-mail reaches your inbox, it will either be an individual message or a digest, (user choice). The subject line will include "Wanted: or
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MENUNKATUCK AUDUBON SOCIETY

is a chapter of National Audubon Society. The newsletter is published bi-monthly by Menunkatuck Audubon Society.
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Junk

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Offer: " the item in question and the location. An example could be, "Offer: Full size mattress and box spring for pickup in Branford." This is actually something I posted a few years ago. It was gone the next day. After reading your e-mails, if something catches your eye, contact the poster directly and try to arrange a pickup time. You may not be the first response as some more popular posts (records and electronics) go very quickly.

I have used Freecycle™ for about 3 years now and have been amazed with how quickly some items go, and the fact that some items go at all. I have posted and successfully had picked up the following items: previously mentioned bed, particle-board bookcase, bubble wrap, flower pots, a set of glasses, old CDs, an old mountain bike with flat tires, and even an old leather recliner. The recliner went in about 24 hours and the guy came and picked it up and moved it to his car. Afterwards he told me he was an accountant and could do my taxes for me.

Lots of items come up frequently. I see fish tanks, baby clothes and items, maternity gear, old movies and board games, posted very often. All of these items above are quickly followed by a post that starts, Taken: fish tank, etc. So if you have some old random stuff in your basement, attic, or garage, check into Freecycling the item. You don't have to take up space in the landfills, and the person picking the item up is getting something that they have been looking for. Oh, and you have one less item to deal with in your home. Maybe you will even find some new treasures you have been questing for!

Christopher Sullivan resides in Branford and is an aquatic biologist and environmental

MAS Scholarship Offered to High School Seniors

MAS will again be giving out a college scholarship to a deserving high school senior. We are looking for students who have, during their school years, shown an interest in nature studies and intend to make a career out of acquiring knowledge about nature, the environment, ecology – in short, life on earth – and put that knowledge to good use.

Visit Menunkatuck's web site: www.menunkatuck.org

Menunkatuck Audubon Society is committed to work locally to preserve our natural ecosystems for the benefit of people and the earth's biodiversity. Through education and conservation activities within our communities, we raise public awareness of environmental issues and connections to the natural world.

Indoor Meetings Feature Varied Topics

2007 Calendar

Want to learn how to keep those pesky deer out of your beautiful gardens? Join us on March 14 for *Strategies for Controlling Deer Browse Damage in Home Gardens* with Dr. Jeffrey S. Ward, Chief Scientist with the Department of Forestry and Horticulture at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station.

White-tailed deer populations in Connecticut have steadily increased from fewer than twenty animals in 1900 to an estimated 76,000 or more today. In many areas, deer are no longer considered an awe-inspiring, valuable natural resource, but rather tick carriers, agricultural pests, traffic hazards, and garden destroyers. Successful gardening in areas with large deer herds is possible. Dr. Ward will present a five-step strategy to limit browse damage in home gardens: herd control, physical barriers, repellents, psychological deterrents, and browse-resistant plant selection.

SPECIAL PROGRAM!

Please note that our April program will be held on Saturday, April 28 at 4 P.M., and not on our usual Wednesday evening. Join us in welcoming Michael and Amy LeBlanc and one of their live wolves for a *Wolf Talk* program in the Whitfield Room of the Guilford Com-



March 14, 2007

Controlling Deer Browse Damage in Home Gardens *Jeffrey S. Ward*

Saturday, April 28, 2007, 4 PM

Wolf Talk *Michael and Amy LeBlanc*

May 9, 2007

Puma: Tracking America's Big Cat *Gina Nichol*

June 13, 2007

Bee Keeping *Leslie Huston*

Indoor meetings are at the Nathanael Greene Community Center and begin at 7:30 P.M.

Directions to the Nathanael Greene Community Center:
I-95 to exit 58 in Guilford. South on Route 77 for 8/10 miles.
The Community Center is on the right between Route 1 and the Guilford Green.

Refreshments are served.

munity Center.

Wolf Talk has been educating people about wolves since 1978 at schools, museums, libraries, summer camps, and more. Through education, they clarify the misconceptions about one of our most valued endangered species. They have worked with and studied wolves at research facilities, zoos, in the wild and at their compound in Massachusetts and look forward to sharing with us their experiences with these beautiful mammals.

This live animal presentation is suitable for any age group, so bring the whole family. An array of furs, skulls and more will also be on display, with a question and answer session to follow the program.

We will charge a small admission of \$5 for adults and \$3 for kids (under 12) to help defray the costs of this special program.

On May 9 Gina Nichol will present *Puma: Tracking America's Big Cat*. Known by various names—puma, cougar, catamount, panther—the mountain lion (*Felis concolor*) is one of the largest wild cats in the Americas, second in size only to the jaguar. According to the US Fish and Wildlife (Continued on Page 4.)

Indoor Meetings

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Service, mountain lions have the widest distribution of any native mammal in the western hemisphere. Once ranging from northern British Columbia to southern Chile and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the mountain lion's North American range has been reduced to the western United States and Canada. A small population of endangered Florida panthers still survives in South Florida. In 1994, scientists confirmed a sighting in Vermont of a female cougar with two kittens, and cougar hair and scat were identified in Massachusetts in 1997. Gina Nichol worked with a team of Earthwatch scientists tracking and studying these magnificent animals. This program, generously illustrated with striking photographs, will feature highlights of her mountain lion study

and will discuss the potential for the reoccurrence of mountain lions in New England.

The wonders of honey bees are



many – from their ingenious social structure to their industrious activities to the bounties they collect in surplus that humans have collected and used for centuries. Honey bees are gentle, generous providers of many gifts.

The hive is an amazing entity – architecturally and as a “factory,” and its occupants are resourceful, ingenious, and selflessly devoted to the colony's survival. Leslie Huston will show and tell many of the fascinating aspects of the world of bees and beekeeping. Leslie, long an avid gardener, branched out into beekeeping and has been exploring the endless joys of the hobby ever since. Starting with one hive, her hobby has grown to where her bees now pollinate orchards and berry patches in several towns. Leslie is a past president of the Back Yard Beekeepers Association (www.backyardbeekeepers.com), and has gotten her certification as an EAS Master Beekeeper.

Join us on June 13 for Leslie's fascinating program, including an observation hive in Plexiglas, and her honey tasting sampler.

Third Annual All Audubon Day Set For March 31, 2007!

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the 3rd Annual All-Audubon gathering scheduled for Saturday March 31 from 8:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the Heritage Resort and Conference Center in Southbury. This is the one time each year all Audubon Chapters, members, board members and staff gather to renew friendships, share information and chart the course for the year ahead.

Scott Weidensaul will be the keynote speaker talking about his experiences and findings while researching/ writing *Return to Wild America -- A Yearlong Search for the Continent's Natural Soul*. The book is about his experiences while re-tracing the route of James Fisher and Roger Tory Peterson's epic journey in 1953: 30,000 miles in 100 days, birding their way around North America, an odyssey outlined in their classic book, *Wild America*. In his new book, Scott compares what has changed since then and what is still the same. He will also be doing a book-signing.

The agenda for the day will include panels and interactive discussions on education, policy, and bird conservation, and many other exciting topics! Exhibits and displays will also be available all day. \$35 per person registration fee includes breakfast items and a sumptuous lunch buffet.

To register please send your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, number of people attending and a check to: Tiffany Wittmer, Audubon Connecticut, 613 Riversville Road, Greenwich CT 06831.

Spring Field Trips

Spring Walk at Braemore Preserve in Durham Saturday, April 7, 2007 10 AM

Join Trail Manager and Land Steward Paul Mei for a tour of this 95-acre gem. We'll walk the trails through the unique wet meadow habitat, forests, and hopefully see some vernal pools. The hike includes some moderate ups and downs past several outcrops to Reid's View, the highest point on the preserve where on a clear day, you can see Long Island Sound. We'll also walk to Coon's Pond in Madison. Meet at the Braemore Preserve parking lot on route 77 in Durham. Participants are encouraged to bring binoculars, water, and wear appropriate footwear for hiking (trails may be muddy) and weather appropriate clothes. For more information, contact Paul Mei at 203.457.1938.

Geology Walk at Hammonasset Sunday April 15, 2007, 11 AM

Join Nina Levenduski for an easy, 1-2 hour walk exploring Hammonasset State Park's geologic history and glacially formed landscape. Binoculars and a hand lens are recommended but not required. Meet at the Nature Center parking lot. Call Nina at 860-301-1547 for questions/cancellations.

Spring Wildflower Walk Sunday, May 6 10 AM - noon

Join botanist Bob Kuchta for a walk to look for spring ephemerals along the Neck River near its headwaters in north Madison. Parking is available nearby in the Congre-

gational Church lot and also the North Madison Fire house lot near the pond on Opening Hill Road. For more information, contact Bob Kuchta at 203 245-8032

Birdathon

Saturday, May 12, 2006

All Menunkatuck Audubon members will receive a mailing describing this important birding and fund-raising activity. Stay tuned for updates on our most important bird watching event of the year.

Menunkatuck Audubon Society

Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 28, 2007

—Elections—

President – Suzanne Botta Sullivan

Treasurer – Connie Mortensen

Secretary – Dorothy Holabird

Directors – Henry Ferris, Cindi Kobak, Nina Levenduski, Gina Nichol, John Picard, Dennis

Riordan, Lillian Rojas

Please Don't Feed the Bears

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property, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) recommends that you:

- Take down your feeders from late March through November. This is the time that bears are active.
- Keep garbage cans in the garage or basement until the day of pickup. (You can also add ammonia to the trash to repel bears and other animals.)
- Store pet and livestock food indoors in sealed containers.
- Do not add meats or sweet fruits to a compost pile. (You can sprinkle lime on the pile to reduce the usual compost scent.)
- Clean and store your backyard grill in a shed or garage when not in use.
- Protect livestock with electric fencing and move into a barn at night, if possible.
- Reinforce beehives or protect with electric fencing.
- Never, never intentionally feed bears.

A bear sighting in your yard can be a thrilling experience if you have taken the proper precautions. You can observe the bear after moving indoors with your children and pets, and wait for it to leave on its own. Or you can make loud noises (banging metal pots together) from a safe distance to scare the bear off. Either way, report your bear sighting to the DEP's Wildlife Division at 860-675-8130, or their 24-hour hotline, 860-424-3333, or their website, www.dep.state.ct.us.

Biodiversity 2006

Know your natural neighbors



Please Don't Feed The Bears

As a black bear (*Ursus americanus*) awakens from its winter nap it will seek out fresh spring plants to eat, such as those emerging in wetlands. It is an omnivore, and will also eat grasses, ants, bees, honey, fruits and berries, and occasionally small mammals. It will scavenge carrion, such as a deer carcass, and later in the year it will fatten up on the nuts of many hardwoods, especially acorns and beechnuts. But for now, the scent of any possible food source, including your bird feeder, pet's food dish, garbage can or compost pile is mighty inviting to a hungry bear.

BIO BITS

Connecticut's black bear population has increased dramatically over the past 20 years. What was once a slow movement of bears from neighboring states has evolved into a resident population that breeds successfully in our forests.

Most of these bears reside in the northwestern corner of the state, but several sightings have been reported in our area. Consequently, if you live near a forested area, the chances of seeing a bear in your yard are increasing.

With its excellent sense of smell a bear can pick up the scent of a meal from quite a distance. Additionally, a drought year may result in a shortage of natural foods and cause a bear to travel several miles in search of a meal. As a rule, the black bear is a shy animal with a healthy fear of humans. But a hungry bear that finds food close to a human residence can quickly lose its fear and become a real problem. These visitors tend to be young bears recently out on their own and learning the ropes. If one learns that humans provide a meal, whether intentionally or not, it will continue to visit residences in search of an easy meal.

It is vitally important that homeowners take responsibility for removing attractants, such as bird feeders, when a bear begins to visit. Failure to remove the food source may result in a bear making return visits and destroying property. The animal then becomes a "problem bear" in the neighborhood and may regrettably need to be destroyed. Therefore, to protect the bear and your
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Saturday Morning Birding at Hammonasset

Saturdays, April 21 through June 30

7:45 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.

Leader: Jerry Connolly

Meet at the Audubon Shop, Madison

Every Saturday morning through June, Jerry will lead birders through Hammonasset to see returning sea birds, shore birds, and other migrants. There is a \$4.00 fee.

For information call 203-245-9056.

Sunrise Birding, LLC Birding & Natural History Tours

2007 Local Bird Walk Schedule:

Wednesday, February 14, 2007 - 8 AM, Hammonasset State Park, Madison

Wednesday, February 21, 2007 - 8 AM, Secret Shorebird Spot, Westbrook

Wednesday, March 14, 2007 - 8 AM, Hammonasset State Park, Madison

Saturday, March 17, 2007 - 8 AM, Hammonasset State Park, Madison

Wednesday, March 21, 2007 - 8 AM, Hammonasset State Park, Madison

Wednesday, March 28, 2007 - 8 AM, Hammonasset State Park, Madison

Saturday, March 31, 2007 - 8 AM, Branford Supply Ponds, Branford

Thursday, April 5, 2007 - 8 AM, Hammonasset State Park, Madison

Also, watch for Birding By Ear Workshops coming in May!

For further information, go to www.sunrisebirding.com
or call Gina Nichol at 203-453-6724

Menunkatuck welcomes new members

Menunkatuck Audubon Society welcomes the following new members:

Branford: Cynthia Barnett, Richard J Batick, Kathryn Coffin, Michele Hughes, Donald & Kristin Pawlitz

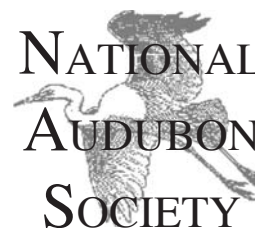
East Haven: Jane Solomine

Guilford: Carolyn B Allen, Jeremy Bunting, Ginette Kayser, Joseph J Marganski, Paul W Mei, Jane G Muir, Letty Russell

Madison: Marion Cunningham, Mrs Barbara Lesage, G Meunier, Marie Bloomquist

New Haven: Sara Bushey, Patricia Dolan, Susan Gustafson, K Haskins, Stephen P Joy, Allan Linton Jr, Mary Nuelsen, Judy Peluso, Portillo Kids, Nancy Zsiba

Preston: Martha Fisher



Chapter Membership Application

Yes, I'd like to join.

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter.

Please send AUDUBON magazine and my membership card to the address below.

My check for \$20 is enclosed.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____

ZIP: _____

Please make all checks payable to the National Audubon Society.

Send this application and your check to:

National Audubon Society
700 Broadway
New York, NY 10003

LOCAL CHAPTER

Menunkatuck Audubon Society
D63/7XCH

Connecticut Rare Bird Alerts

www.virtualbirder.com/bmail/ctbird/200508/w2/index.html

Menunkatuck Audubon Society
PO Box 214
Guilford, CT 06437

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MENUNKATUCK

March 2007



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NEXT MEETING

CONTROLLING DEER BROWSE DAMAGE IN HOME GARDENS JEFFREY S. WARD

Wednesday, March 14, 2007

7:30 PM

Guilford Community Center

Route 77

Guilford

Are you on our mailing list?

If not, send in this form with \$10.00 to cover costs to be sure that you are informed about our activities.

Please add me to your mailing list. Enclosed is \$10.00 to cover the costs of the newsletter for one year.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ ZIP: _____

Mail to:

Menunkatuck Audubon Society
PO Box 214
Guilford, CT 06437