

Alive!

At The Boston Nature Center



Mass Audubon
Boston Nature Center

Summer 2007

Kingbirds Nesting at Boston Nature Center

By Pam Chatis, BNC Sanctuary Committee

Unlike most of the birds that migrate to Boston announcing their arrival with raucous calling, the Eastern Kingbird arrives quietly around May tenth. We might see them sitting quietly on a wire, fencepost, or flying in and out of trees. The Eastern Kingbird is a large flycatcher with a broad white line across the tip of the tail and white underparts. Sexes are alike in plumage but the male tends to sit more upright and keeps its crown feathers in a crest.



Eastern Kingbird
Photo: Eduardo Del Solar

You can recognize the Kingbird by its high-pitched sputtering notes followed by a down slurred buzzy "zeer". "Ti-t-t-ti-zer".

The Kingbird can choose a variety of nesting sites from fruit trees in an orchard to trees or shrubs that grow close to a pond, river, or stream. Here at the Boston Nature Center a

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From Birds to Bards, Participants Enjoy the Collaboration of Green Open Space

The second annual Birds and Bards Festival was a wonderful success! People from around Boston flocked to three of Boston's premiere green spaces to take part in an annual event that celebrates birds, poetry, nature and more.

Events commenced on Friday, June 1 at Franklin Park. Participants viewed the acclaimed film, "Winged Migration" and later learned how it was filmed by Boston Phoenix freelance film critic, Peg Aloï.

Saturday, June 2 brought the festival and nearly 145 visitors to the Boston Nature Center. The day commenced at 7:00 am with a bird walk, led by Simon Perkins, Field Ornithologist for Mass Audubon. The walk was followed by a continental breakfast and discussion led by Wayne Petersen about the impact of global warming on migrating birds. Other highlights of the day included live raptor demonstrations with Stephen Hutchinson of Blue Hills Trailside Museum, Native American storytelling by Owl Woman Pat Bade, and a guided tour of installed art by Studios Without Walls artists. The trails were dotted with poems by Keats, Angelou, and others which were selected by Mass Art students and their professor, Lois Hetland.

The festival ended on Sunday, June 3 at Forest Hills Cemetery, where participants went birding, learned about the history of the cemetery, and enjoyed a mid-afternoon music concert by the Chameleon Arts Ensemble.

The Birds and Bards Festival is a great way to learn about nature, spend time with family and friends, and get outdoors. We hope that you will join us next year as we celebrate our third annual Birds and Bards Festival!

By Julie Brandlen, BNC Director



Scarborough Pond Foot Bridge, Franklin Park



Palm Warbler, Boston Nature Center



Forest Hills Cemetery

Photo: Eduardo Del Solar

Spring Fling '07

By Alexandra Rollins, BNC Sanctuary Committee

Bliss. Or pretty close to it.

One lovely Sunday afternoon in May, 120 of us gathered to listen to the Boston Latin School's string quartet play sublime selections as we tested all manner of sweets and finger food, met new friends, wondered at the abundance of bird life – Wild Turkeys and Hawks, in particular – and tested our resolve and risk-aversion at a fabulous silent auction.

We celebrated at BNC quite happily, while adding several new members to our rosters. Membership is an important indication of BNC's role and stability in the region and donors want to know that the number increases, so join if you can or write us to tell us of your support if you can't. Definitely come to our next event!

Our auction raised almost \$6,000 on the 63 items that were donated to benefit the summer camp where, in nine weeks, neighborhood children learn about the environment. A number of

us gave or solicited donations and many more volunteers and supporters made the afternoon profitable and fun. The donations were as varied as the people who live, visit, and work in our communities. I bid on several photographs and works of art, a necklace made of gold with concrete and



The Pansy Pots were a huge hit.

pearls [every woman should have both in her life], a stack of books given by someone who kindly gave a valuable assortment, and several gift certificates from local shops and restaurants. And no one seemed able to resist bidding on the tickets to the Red Sox and the NE Revolution, the baskets of bird books and houses, the super-duper binoculars, or a night on the town. I wonder what I'll win next year?

We hope that our donors are happy with the results of their generosity, thoughtfulness, and kindness, and that they will see a difference from the work we do in teaching about nature through exploring, journaling, arts and crafts, reading, and all sorts of discoveries. Many thanks go to the following:

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Antioch New England Institute | Co-SEED Program | Arnold Arboretum | Mark Bellerose | Birch House and Garden | Boing! JP s Toy Shop | Boston Building Material Coop | Boston Celtics | Boston Nature Center | Boston Red Sox | Anne Brooke | Cathy Campbell | Canto 6 Bakery | Centre Street Cafø | Jennifer Charles | City of Boston | Tom Daly | Roy DeLonga | Forest Hills Educational |
| Trust | Fresh Hair | Martha Heath | Malcolm Hewitt | Hilton Boston Logan Airport | Eduardo del Solar | Fiore s Bakery | Fire Opal | Himalayan Bistro | Tom | Jacobson/Equilibrium | Bodywork and Yoga | Ginger Lawrence | Sondra Madison | Mass Energy | Consumers Alliance | Museum of Science | New England Book Fair | |



Sweets and finger food were tasted by all.



Boston Latin School's string quartet.



Bidding on one of the 63 Silent Auction items.

Finding Healing at the Clark Cooper Community Garden (CCCG)

By Jennifer Charles, BNC Sanctuary Committee Chair

It is well documented that engaging in garden activities improves mind, body and spirit by providing an invaluable outlet to relieve mental stress as well as to promote on-going physical exercise. For most of the CCCG at the Boston Nature Center, enjoying the benefits of the spring on one's hands and knees means digging, weeding trimming and raking plots into neat rows and beds in preparation for planting. For many gardeners, though, who may be physically challenged by age or disability, the CCCG boasts several raised beds which effectively bring terra firma up to an accessible level enabling these gardeners to comfortably enjoy their gardening hobby with physical ease.

The raised beds are constructed with wood about twenty eight inches high, and about four feet across — a comfortable height and width so that the beds are accessible from all sides. Filled with compost and topsoil, these oblong containers require less maintenance and less care than the ground-level beds and rows to maximize their value to the gardening community. With the growing season soon to be in full swing attention must be given that the paths around the raised beds are maintained for mobility and maneuverability.

The raised bed gardener benefits from the same advantages as gardeners who use containers. Raised beds are watered with a good soaking during the cooler hours in the morning or evening. Also, the gardener may apply organic fertilizer one time a month and remove flower heads that are dead in order to ensure the best yield all summer long. Given the location of the raised beds, there is less need to apply organic pest deterrents. However, many gardeners plant Marigolds to deter common pests to vegetables.

The raised-bed gardener benefits from the advantages of a container garden. Weeding will be minimal but during hot Summer days, remember to water these beds with a good soaking during the cooler hours in the morning or evening. Also fertilize about one time a month, and dead-head flowers for the best yield all summer long. Located above the reach and run of larger pests means less need for pesticides. Marigolds are often included in raised beds to deter common pests to vegetables.

Reaping the fruits of gardening for disabled or aged gardeners mean more than returning home with buckets of tomatoes and cucumbers and hands



Photos: Martha Heath

Finding Healing at the CCCG

Cont.' from page 2.

full of fragrant herbs to share and use. For many, these activities cultivate a sense of accomplishment and improve self esteem. For all of us at BNC, the CCCG raised beds provide the means for enjoying the true diversity of our neighbors and sharing an important source of psychological and physical healing with the physically challenged.

BNC's Photo Gallery

By Cathy Campbell, BNC Sanctuary Committee and Roy DeLonga

This month's featured photographer at the Boston Nature Center is Roy DeLonga. A Massachusetts native, Roy was born in 1954. He began to photograph the things around him at the age of 10 and at 18, he attended the Art Institute of Boston and then New England School of Photography. Over the years, he has managed photography stores, raced sports cars, enjoyed family life and presently works as a computer technician in the fields of Information Technology and Hardware production.

In 2003, he received his first digital SLR (single-lens reflex camera) and has not looked back since. It is safe to say that every daylight hour not spent working you will find him behind the wheel of his FJ Cruiser moving from one birding spot to another. Because of a pair of bad knees, most of his photographs are taken from the driver's seat of this faithful truck. Roy writes, "Life is way too short to pass up a good weekend of birding and photography."

Roy credits the digital SLR with his renewed passion for photography. No longer does he wait days to view the results of new techniques. The feedback is immediate and because of that instant gratification, his growth continues to be unchecked. Easy access to other photographers through the internet has also allowed him to judge his growth and see how his work stands up when compared to others.

We thank Roy for sharing his spectacular birding photographs with us. Our favorite is the beautiful but ever elusive Ring-necked Pheasant living right here at the BNC.

Rappin' with Raptors!

Rappin' with Raptors Anniversary Event
Saturday, September 29th,
1:00-4:00 p.m.

Come celebrate the 5th anniversary of the George Robert White Environmental Conservation Center.

There will be fun for all ages! This is a free event.



Kingbirds Cont.' from page 1.

pair of Kingbirds, have chosen to nest along the boardwalk in the meadow. Take a walk and try and find their nest! The Kingbird's nest is built mostly by the female and is large and bulky, made of bark, twigs, and weeds and often lined with feathers, hair, and soft plants. The Eastern Kingbird lays three to five eggs, most commonly a creamy white with markings of various shades of brown. The female incubates the eggs for 14-17 days and is occasionally relieved of her duties by the male so that she may feed. Both parents feed the hatchlings a variety of insects and berries. The fledglings leave the nest taking their first flights at around 14 days post hatching.

The parents continue to feed the fledglings for an additional three to five weeks. Due to the long period the fledglings are dependent on their parents, Kingbirds usually

raise only one brood per season. Kingbirds stay in their family units into August as migration time nears and usually join other groups of Kingbirds flying southward through Central America reaching their final wintering spot in South America.

Since Kingbird pairs often re-pair in consecutive years, reclaiming the same territory, we can look forward to this pair of Kingbirds at the Boston Nature Center returning to nest with us next spring.

When you are at the Boston Nature Center looking for the Kingbird nest walk around the many trails and look around for our other nesting birds: Tree Swallows, Yellow Warblers, Robins, Red-winged Blackbirds, and Warbling Vireos.

For more information on Eastern Kingbirds and the other birds mentioned above go to: www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds

Dragonflies at the Nature Center!



Common Whitetail



Blue Dasher



Common Whitetail (female)



Eastern Amberwing (female)



Ruby Meadowhawk



White-faced Meadowhawk

Photos: Eduardo Del Solar

Did you know that dragonflies have been around for 300 million years? Many beautiful species live at the Boston Nature Center.

Dragonflies are extremely valuable insects because they specialize in killing mosquitoes. They are able to grasp and hold their prey with their legs. Dragonflies can fly forward and backward because their wings move independently from one another.

Dragonflies nymphs, start their life cycle in ponds feeding on mosquito larvae, other insects and tadpoles. They gradually develop from nymphs into the beautiful adults shown above.

Dragonflies are very colorful. Their wings have many different patterns and colors ranging from black spots to iridescent greens, reds and blues.

Take a walk through the Nature Center to see how many of these beautiful insects you can identify.

Check out Mass Audubon's website
www.massaudubon.org/boston



BNC Welcomes New Staff

Tim Cooke

Tim is our new Property Manager. He has been a farmer and carpenter for 18 years. His interests are no-till farming, building machines for organic farmers, soil science, and sustainable construction. He has worked with school groups on farms for 10 years and looks forward to continuing similar work and new duties at the Boston Nature Center.



Left to right: Brian Lawlor and Tim Cooke.

Brian Lawlor

Brian is a new Teacher Naturalist at the Boston Nature Center. He will be working with public schools in the Roslindale and Roxbury neighborhoods of Boston, and he is most excited to collaborate with teachers, parents and students in order to develop gardening and composting programs in these schoolyards. Brian is a graduate of Oregon State University, and was previously employed with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. When he is not busy being a Naturalist you might find him playing his ukulele, discovering Jamaica Plain, or getting out of the city to go surfing.

Summer Discoveries and Summer Camp

NEW Summer Discoveries program at the Boston Nature Center

We now offer field trips for other summer camps to the BNC through our new Summer Discoveries program. During each field trip session (half day or full day), participants experience the natural world up close. Learning and understanding are enhanced with outdoor explorations, hands-on materials, stories, games and fun projects. A choice of topics are available.

Want a cool Summer Camp experience? Come to the BNC!

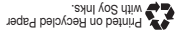
Celebrate school vacation with Summer Camp for children ages 6-14. Each of our nine weeklong sessions focuses on a different theme relating to nature and science. Campers have a great time exploring the sanctuary and learn about the natural world. Space may still be available. **Call us today!**

Call 617-983-8500 or email bnc@massaudubon.org for registration information on these programs.



Wish List:

- Defibrillator for public use
- New books for all ages regarding any aspect of nature
- Skid Steer
- Wheelbarrows
- Sturdy Rubbermaid (type) carts with wheels
- Leather and garden gloves
- Six pairs of rubber waders



The Trails: Open every day, dawn to dusk.
 Saturday, Sunday, and Monday holidays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 The Boston Nature Center is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 If you get lost, call 617-983-8500.
 still identify it as "Boston State Hospital" or "State Hospital."
 Walk Hill Street, and Harvard Street. Many road maps and bus route maps
 Hospital, bounded by Morton Street (Route 203), American Legion Highway.
 Boston Nature Center is located on the grounds of the old Boston State
THE BOSTON NATURE CENTER IS EASY TO FIND.
 Stanley Washington
 Sonny Washington
 Charlene Ross
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 Rulus Lawrence
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SANCTUARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
 Paula Davis, Receptionist
 Tim Cooke, Property Manager
 Irma Cambara, Receptionist
 Andrew Breck, Teacher Naturalist
 Susan Brace, Teacher Naturalist
 Mohamed Abdulrahman, Property Worker
 Julie Brandlen, The Anne & Peter Brooke Director
 Jean Dorcus, Education Manager
 Jaimy George, Teacher Naturalist
 Chris Greco, Intern
 Timothy Juba, Caretaker
 Brian Lawlor, Teacher Naturalist
 Enca Quigley, Teacher Naturalist
 Kylee Wilson, Office Manager

STAFF:

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www.massaudubon.org



SAVE THE DATE!
Rappin' with Raptors
Anniversary Event
Saturday, September 29, 2007
2:00-4:00 p.m.

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 U.S. Postage
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