

BNC Welcomes New Staff

Susan Brace

Susan joined BNC as a Teacher Naturalist this fall. She is a long-time resident of Jamaica Plain and comes to us from the J. P. Neighborhood Development Corp. where she worked for many years in community development finance. She was also a volunteer guide with the school programs at the Arnold Arboretum. Susan



Left to right: Susan Brace, Andrew Breck and Kylee Wilson.

made the career change to environmental education to follow a lifelong interest in nature and to share her passion with the next generation. She is working with the J. M. Curley School to enhance and extend its science curriculum as part of the Boston Schools Environmental Initiative and is looking forward to connecting students and teachers to their rich local environment with hands-on explorations.

Andrew Breck

Andrew is a new teacher naturalist at the BNC. He is the OST (Out-of-School Time) Educator, primarily responsible for running the various after-school programs. Prior to joining the BNC this fall, Andrew worked for a year as an AmeriCorps VISTA environmental educator at the Urban Ecology Institute.

Kylee Wilson

Kylee is the new office manager at the BNC. She comes to us from the Pat Brody Shelter for Cats in Lunenburg, where she was Assistant to the Director. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Conservation from the University of New Hampshire and a strong interest in wildlife/habitat protection and ecology. She is very excited about her new position with Mass Audubon and the Boston Nature Center.

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

Alive!

At The Boston Nature Center



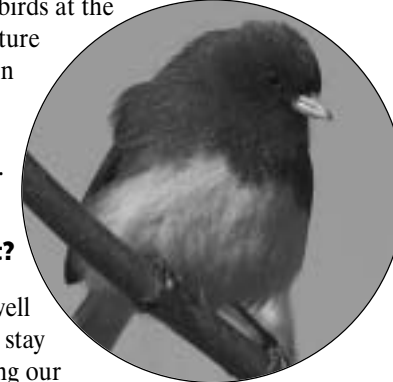
Mass Audubon
Boston Nature Center

Winter 2007

Winter Birds

By Andrew Birch, Property Manager

Every winter wildlife in New England is forced to deal with sub-zero temperatures, freezing rain and snow. Fortunately, they have many adaptations to help them deal with the dangerous winter weather. Some animals hibernate and many of our birds migrate to warmer climates, but a careful observer will find numerous birds at the Boston Nature Center even during the coldest winter days.



Dark-eyed Junco
Photo: Eduardo Del Solar

How do they do it?

Birds are well adapted to stay warm during our harsh winters. Feathers are an excellent form of protection from the cold. Down feathers are very fuzzy and do most of the insulating, while contour feathers help keep the birds "shape" and provide a nearly watertight barrier for the bird. These work together to keep the cold air out. During cold weather you will also find birds that look

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Rappin' with Raptors Festival

The BNC celebrated the 2nd Rappin' with Raptors festival on September 16, 2006. The day also marked the fourth anniversary of the George Robert White Environmental Conservation Center. A sumptuous barbeque topped by ice cream from JP Licks, music

by the Branches Steel Band, and nature activities of all sorts drew a crowd of over three hundred from the neighborhoods surrounding the Nature Center. The star guests of the day were, of course, the raptors themselves - a Red-tailed Hawk, an Eastern Screech Owl and an American Kestrel. One of the BNC's favorites is the Red-tailed Hawk as many of these beautiful creatures make the BNC their home. All visiting raptors were rescued and have injuries that prevent them from living in the wild.

Children made owl puppets, examined owl pellets, and created raptors of their own from natural materials. BNC Teen Ambassadors showed their talents for face painting. Because the fall weather was perfect, guests were able to wander the nature trails of the BNC in search of hawks and other resident birds that have made the BNC a favorite among local birdwatchers. Members of the Clark Cooper Community Gardens shared their harvest with a demonstration of a vegetable garden. As always, families built and took home their very own birdhouses. The BNC staff was joined by their partners from the



Face painting with BNC Teen Ambassador Monique Brunner and visitor, bird house building, and live raptor demonstrations with birds who live at the Blue Hills Trailside Museum—all activities at the Rappin' with Raptors Festival. Photos: Martha Heath, BNC Sanctuary Committee

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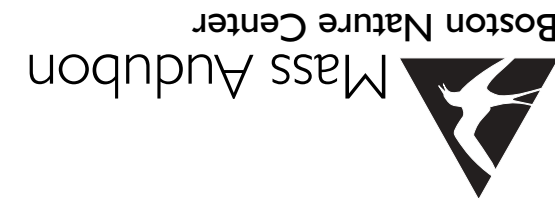
Answers to the Bird Quiz: A. Black-capped Chickadee, B. Northern Cardinal, C. Downy Woodpecker, D. White-breasted Nuthatch, E. Eastern Tufted Titmouse, F. Blue Jay

STAFF:
Julie Brandlen, The Anne & Peter Brooke Director
Jean Dorcus, Education Manager
Mohamed Abdulrahman, Property Worker
Timothy Juba, Caretaker
Andrew Birch, Property Manager
Susan Brace, Teacher Naturalist
Erica Quigley, Teacher Naturalist
Andrew Breck, Teacher Naturalist
Aimee Tow, Teacher Naturalist
Paula Davis, Receptionist
Irma Cambara, Receptionist
Kylee Wilson, Office Manager

SANCTUARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
Jennifer Charles, Chair
Tom Daly, Vice Chair
Betsy Johnson, Clerk
Cathy Campbell
Pam Chats
Bill Coady
Bruce Fulford, Environment Committee Chair
Alma Habewold
Jim Hill
Martha Heath, Planning and Development Committee Chair
Rufus Lawrence
Alexandra Rollins
Charlene Ross
Stanley Washington

THE BOSTON NATURE CENTER IS EASY TO FIND.
Boston Nature Center is located on the grounds of the old Boston State Hospital, bounded by Morton Street (Route 203), American Legion Highway, Walk Hill Street, and Harvard Street. Many road maps and bus route maps still identify it as "Boston State Hospital" or "State Hospital."
If you get lost, call 617-983-8500.
The Boston Nature Center is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, Sunday, and Monday holidays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
The Trails: Open every day, dawn to dusk.
Printed on Recycled Paper with Soy Inks.

500 Walk Hill Street, Mattapan, MA 02126 • 617-983-8500
www.massaudubon.org



SAVE THE DATE!
Spring Fling & Silent Auction
Sunday, May 6, 2007
2:00-4:00 p.m.

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 4
Lincoln, MA

Rappin' with Raptors

Cont.' from page 1.

Museum of Science, New England Aquarium, Forest Hills Educational Trust, Earthworks and the Olmsted National Historic Site.

The Boston Nature Center thanks all of its sponsors who made the event possible: Blue Hill Press; Cedar Street Foundation; The City of Boston; Feinberg, Campbell, and Zack; GunnDesign; Harry R. Feldman Inc.; Halvorson Design Partnership; ICON Architects; Individual Gifts; Jamaica Plain Forest Hills Kiwanis; JP Licks; Mass Energy Consumers Alliance; Pro Print Boston; Red Sun Press; Seaport Graphics; Solar Works; Urban Strategy America Fund; and Olmsted Green Development/ Lena New Boston.

Thank you!

By Cathy Campbell, BNC Sanctuary Committee Member

The Residences at Harvard Commons

As the marketing team for the 54 new single-family home development called *The Residences at Harvard Commons*, the Beacon Group recognizes the many benefits of having Mass Audubon's 67-acre Boston Nature Center as a neighbor.



In a program designed to benefit both the sales efforts and Mass Audubon, the Beacon Group is providing every new home owner in *Harvard Commons* with the gift of a Mass Audubon membership. We hope that this will encourage new long-term Mass Audubon memberships from the new residents and their friends.

The BNC's "green" facility and the many programs offered at the nature center are a wonderful compliment to Franklin Park, Arnold Arboretum, and other nearby green space.

The new custom-built single-family homes at *Harvard Commons* range from a 1,950 square foot 3 bedroom, 2.5 bath model listed at \$429,000, to a 4-5 bedroom 3.5 bath, 3,000 square feet home listed at \$569,900.

For additional information, please contact Shelley White at The Beacon Group 617-524-1200 x206.

Composting Operations Contribute to Our Environmental Health

By Alexandra Rollins, BNC Sanctuary Committee Member

Composting here in the city – as differentiated from composting on a farm – can be an active or passive process. Wastes generated by households can be composted in enclosed containers in the back yard (that's the active track) or, for large quantities such as we have when the leaves fall or the garden gets its spring muck-out, the city-operated composting facility here at the Boston Nature Center is the ticket. (This is the passive option.) If you choose to be engaged actively in composting, make your own or choose from over 30 types of containers that will facilitate the job and keep rodents out. Check with the Boston Building Materials Coop for options.



Backyard composting container.

A method I find particularly enticing is vermiculture – literally running a worm farm. Unfortunately, that's not terribly practical here in the northeast because the worms require temperatures that run



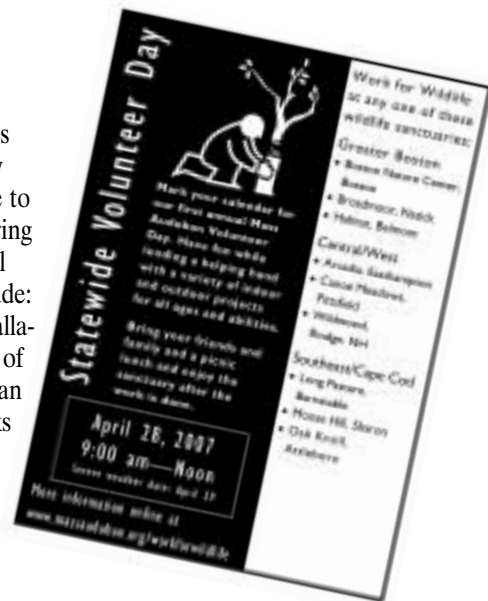
between 50 and 70 degrees but, if you have a protected area, go to it! Several of our cities nationwide provide their citizens with containers and worms for the composting, so it can't be rocket science to get it right.

At the BNC, the city collects leaves from our streets and yards, ensures that it gets the proper air and moisture, and allows it to break down naturally. The compost that is generated is wonderful as mulch, as a nutrient-rich additive to the soil, or as planting medium, and is shared with the community gardens across the city.

For more information on composting, go to HowtoCompost.org, just one of many Internet sites on its practical and philosophical advantages.

Statewide Volunteer Day

The Boston Nature Center is thrilled to announce its participation in the annual Statewide Volunteer Day on April 28, 2007 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Come to the sanctuary to enjoy a fun filled morning of exploring and improving the grounds of the BNC. The day will commence with several "clean-up" activities that include: trail restoration, brush removal, gardening, fence installation and painting. Following volunteer efforts, a Signs of Spring Scavenger Hunt will take place so volunteers can explore and enjoy the sanctuary on their own. Snacks and beverages will be provided by the BNC. See you all there and thanks for your help!



Annual Meeting

Boston Nature Center welcomes three new Sanctuary Committee Members after holding elections at its annual meeting in November. Pam Chatis, Alma Habtewold and Jim Hill join the committee to share their experience, expertise, and time. Pam Chatis is a neighbor and works as a researcher and educator with Harvard Medical School in the Division of Infectious Diseases. Jim Hill is recently retired and spent over 30 years in a number of senior positions in state government. Alma Habtewold is member of the Dorchester, Mattapan, and Roxbury Alliance for the Mentally Ill, one of

the community groups that is consistently represented to share their advice with BNC's committees. We are looking forward to having another productive year with the addition of these new members and want to thank the Sanctuary Committee and its related working committees for their commitment. If you are interested in learning more about the Sanctuary Committee or its committees including Education Advisors Task Force, Planning and Development Committee, Environment Committee, please call Julie at 617-983-8500 x-6901 or email at jbrandlen@massaudubon.org

Learn with Us!

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

February School Vacation Week Program February 20-23, 2007

"The Wonders of Winter Wildlife" For Owls (Ages 6-7), Hawks (Ages 8-10), and Adventurers (Ages 11-14) Explore the Boston Nature Center for sights and sounds of the amazing winter world! *Fees are based on a sliding scale. Please call to register.*

Food from the Earth! Spring Exhibit Open House Thursday, March 15th, 6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Do you know where your food comes from? At our fun open house, you can explore this question, participate in hand-on/minds-on activities to investigate food, and enjoy - of course - refreshments! *This is a free program for all ages.*

Spring Fling and Silent Auction
Sunday, May 6th, 2:00-4:00 p.m.
This is a special membership event featuring sweets, sounds, and for the first time, a silent auction! Join our extended membership family to celebrate spring at the BNC! *Free event; donations welcome.*

Bird-A-Thon 2007
Friday, May 18th, 6:00 p.m. through
Saturday, May 19th, 6:00 p.m.
Help count bird species while raising funds for the BNC! All skill levels are strongly encouraged to participate. *This is a free program for all ages.*

Birds & Bards Festival
Friday, June 1- Sunday, June 3, 2007
Sponsored by: Boston Nature Center, Franklin Park Coalition, Forest Hills Cemetery, Olmsted National Historic Site, Zoo New England
This exciting weekend festival will feature various activities at three of Boston's premier green spaces – Franklin Park, Boston Nature Center, and Forest Hills Cemetery. *Nearly all activities are free and will take place rain or shine.*

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.*

Scientists in Action (for children ages 7-10)
Every 2nd and 4th Thursday, 3:30-4:45 p.m.
Looking for something fun and different to do in the afternoon? Join the Scientists in Action! Participants will explore the outdoors, do science experiments, and more. *\$4 members/\$5 non-members*

Early Explorers
(for children ages 3-6 with an adult)
Every 1st and 3rd Thursday, 10:00-11:30 a.m.
Preschool age children learn basic concepts about the natural world through stories, sharing, games, hands-on/minds-on discoveries, art projects, and outdoor explorations. *\$4 members/\$5 non-members*

Winter Birds Cont.' from page 1.

"puffy". This is called ptiloerection and is one of the ways birds use their feathers to stay warm. By puffing out their feathers, they are increasing the insulating qualities of the down feathers.

Birds also roost in groups to stay warm; often tree cavities or human-made birdhouses are used. During extreme cold, a few birds will enter a kind of short-term hibernation called torpor. During torpor a bird slows down its

bodily functions so that it doesn't burn all of its energy trying to stay warm at night. Then, when it warms up the next morning, the bird is ready to get out and find food.

Even with these adaptations to survive, winter birds can use our help. If you have bird feeders, be sure to keep them full during harsh weather and leave your birdhouses out over the winter – the birds in your yard will appreciate it!

Name these Winter Birds!

These birds were recently seen at the BNC - how many can you identify?

Photo: Eduardo Del Solar (Answers are on the back page.)



A.



B.



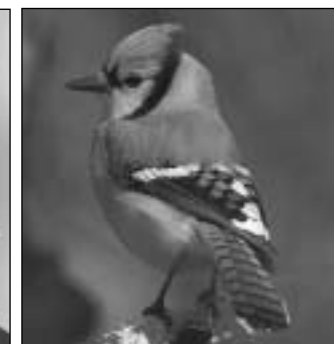
C.



D.



E.



F.

Thank you Erin Brayton and Birch House and Garden!

Erin Brayton, owner of Birch House and Garden, and Julie Brandlen, Sanctuary Director of the Boston Nature Center (BNC) exchange a check for over a thousand dollars. The money, which will help to support the BNC's environmental education programs, was raised at a benefit held at Birch House and Garden. Erin and Julie are pictured with the "Hawks," attendants of the BNC summer camp. The camp provides an all-inclusive, safe, and educational opportunity for children ages 6-13. The BNC and Birch House and Garden plan on continuing this successful partnership. Be sure to visit and support this great garden center!

Birch House and Garden
760 South Street
Roslindale, MA 02131
617-323-3269

