



Andover Village
Improvement Society
Andover's Land Trust
Founded 1894

Spring 2022
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avis update

Join the Weed Warrior Volunteer Program

By Lynn Landry, Weed Warrior Team Leader

Are you interested in learning how to identify and remove invasive plants? The AVIS Weed Warriors group is seeking volunteers for hands-on work parties. Anyone interested should ideally have some rudimentary experience with plant identification, or a desire to learn, and be comfortable working in the woods. We typically meet twice a month for hands-on work parties from April through October. Each session lasts about three hours. You don't need to attend every session, but the more you do the more you learn about plant identification, native plant communities and invasive plant removal during the entire growing season.

How Can I get Involved?

For more information and to be added to the email list, contact volunteer coordinator Denise Boucher (denisegirish@gmail.com) or team leader Lynn Landry (HamletofLynn@gmail.com). You can also sign up through the AVIS website volunteer tab for Weed Warrior and other volunteer opportunities (volunteer@avisandover.org). Put Weed Warriors in the subject line for a speedier reply. Come help shift the advantage back to native plants on our reservations.

Volunteers are needed by AVIS, which is an all-volunteer organization. Please see the list of impressive projects detailed by David Dargie on page 4.

Future Goals

In 2022, we will continue to work at Lupine Reservation and plan to tackle invasive plants encroaching on the nearby Purdon Reservation. As manpower and experience of the group expand, we will offer targeted work parties requested by AVIS Wardens on other reservations.



Left to Right: Jane Gifun, Rachel Fetters, Denise Boucher, Mark Bordogna and Tracy Sioussat, volunteers working to "shift the advantage back to the native plants on our reservations." Photo by Amy Janowsky

Dr. Wheeler Will Discuss the Indigenous History of Andover at Annual Meeting on April 12

Dr. Ryan Wheeler, director of the Robert S. Peabody Institute of Archaeology, will discuss the Indigenous history of Andover, including early archaeological research, the seventeenth-century "sale" of Andover, North Andover, and parts of Lawrence, as well as contemporary efforts to incorporate Indigenous history into classes. One of the most important parts of the story of Indigenous Andover—or Cochi-chewick—is that Native people are still here. By better understanding Indigenous history we can be better allies with our Indigenous neighbors.



Dr. Ryan Wheeler, Director of Robert S. Peabody Institute of Archeology, Phillips Academy

Wheeler became the eighth director of the Peabody Institute in July 2012. Prior to that, he worked for the State of Florida for more than 13 years, serving as State Archaeologist and Chief of the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research, where he was involved in park and museum design and construction. At the Peabody he has focused on expanding the educational programs, work with Indigenous nations on repatriation, and improving the physical and intellectual control over the extensive collections. His research interests include the archaeology of Florida and the Southeast, American Indian art, community-based archaeology, and science applications in archaeology. He is well-known for his dedication to the preservation, protection, and interpretation of archaeological sites. Ryan lives in Medford, MA with his family.

AN INVITATION TO THE AVIS ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday, April 12, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

A virtual ZOOM meeting

Election of Trustees • AVIS financial report • Land Management and special projects

Guest speaker: Dr. Ryan Wheeler, Robert S. Peabody Institute of Archeology, Phillips Academy

"The Indigenous History of Andover"

Please sign up to join the AVIS Annual Meeting at

AVISandover.org

AVIS is exploring a hybrid meeting that will allow people to gather in person if they wish. Please see your membership renewal letter next month or go to AVISandover.org.

Emily Trespas Leaves Legacy to AVIS

By Paula Trespas

It was the combination of Emily Trespas's love of running competitively and years of hiking and running AVIS's many trails since childhood that her vision for the six-hour TARC Spring Thaw Trail Race was born. As race director, she began detailed planning in the winter of 2012, and when the many parts of the maiden race came together, in March, as many as 75 runners had signed on.

TARC (Trail Animals Running Club) was one of Trespas's running clubs, so she had a base ready to run, but she also opened it up to other local runners. The circuitous course was a 3.5 mile loop through the sometimes, mushy, snowy and muddy trails of the Rafton Reservation—the final race, in 2015, took place in two feet of snow. Runners ran the loop continually until six hours had elapsed. Ken “chainsaw” Doran, a dedicated volunteer all four years, cleared Rafton's trails and kept a campfire going in a forest clearing that warmed, if momentarily, runners passing by.

Proceeds from entry fees were donated to AVIS, Andover Conservation Trust and Bay Circuit Alliance. Winners received pieces of Trespas's original art.

Volunteering for AVIS didn't end in 2015. She served a stint on AVIS's board; but her pet project was warden of the Stanley Reservation, which abuts Phillips Academy property. Her duties gave her the chance to enjoy the changing seasons outdoors in the environment she loved. An art teacher at Phillips, she recruited students to help clear Stanley's trails as part of the school's Non Sibi day of community service.

An initiative AVIS encouraged to mark its 125th anniversary was the creation of public art installations. One was Trespas's Migration, 125 small brightly glazed ceramic cups, receptacles for rainwater that attracted butterflies, insects and birds. She attached each one to tall bamboo stakes that swayed in unison in the wind and seemed at home among the tall trailside grasses.



Emily's Bench: In the fall Denis Crispo, Dick Dillon, Burt Batcheller, Ken Doran, and Land Manager David Dargie installed a bench in the Stanley Reservation in memory of Emily Trespas, longtime AVIS trustee and art teacher at Phillips Academy who died on February 11, 2011. It was dedicated on October 29, 2021.

The inscription on Emily's bench was from The Book of Time by Mary Oliver "I rose this morning early as usual, and went to my desk, But it's spring and the thrush is in the woods, somewhere in the twirled branches, and she is singing". Photo by Susan Stott



Pottery cups created by Emily Trespas, former AVIS Trustee, for the celebration of AVIS's 125th anniversary. Courtesy photo

AVIS Goals for 2022

By Jim Sutton, Vice President

In 2021, the AVIS Board of Trustees undertook a strategic planning effort to help them establish priorities and goals for the next five years. Utilizing the services of the facilitator, Robb Johnson of Robb Johnson Associates, the AVIS Mission Statement was revised and 14 goals were established. The following goals were identified as the most immediate and will be worked on in 2022.

Revised Mission Statement

AVIS is a non-profit land trust dedicated to acquiring open space in Andover, Massachusetts and conserving it into perpetuity. AVIS manages its reservations to protect native habitat and provide opportunities for the public to experience, enjoy and learn about nature through passive recreation.

Goals for 2022

- 1 Strengthen the leadership structure of AVIS to best meet the challenges of current day land conservation.
- 2 Develop a process for setting annual project priorities across all areas of AVIS operations, and a corresponding annual budget.
- 3 Develop an indigenous land acknowledgement statement for AVIS
- 4 Enhance the effectiveness of AVIS Wardens through enhanced training, communication and support
- 5 Develop a property management plan system for AVIS reservations.
- 6 Make revisions to the AVIS website, social media platforms, and other IT methods to make them more interactive and engaging.
- 7 Review existing bike policy, propose any revisions to the policy or enforcement strategies, and obtain a Board vote on those revisions (if any).

List of AVIS Donors, 2021

Thank you • We can never thank our supporters, volunteers and donors enough. *The Boston Foundation – Thank you for the annual grants of \$5,000 from the Bessie P. Goldsmith Fund, which are used for improvements and maintenance on the Goldsmith Woodlands, as well as the necessary tools and equipment. *Annual Appeal Donors during 2021. Thank you for supporting AVIS with your donations, and for keeping the land protected and open to the public. Thank you!

The Boston Foundation also made a significant donation to enhance a wetland viewing area at the entrance to the Goldsmith Woodlands. Visitors will begin to notice the improvements this summer as invasive plants are removed and native plants are added.

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There are many ways to donate – Donate your time or money through Amazon Smile to support AVIS with your purchases, send a check to Andover PO Box 5097, look at the website: avisandover.org, or check with your employer for a matching donation.

Volunteers Have Been Very Busy

By David Dargie, Land Manager

David Dargie has shared many projects on AVIS reservations that were done in six months, June to November 2021. If you want to be a volunteer, please be in touch with David Dargie, Land Manager, Amy Janovsky, Land Stewardship Director or Denise Boucher, Volunteer Coordinator.



Cowardens Chris Grobecki and George Stoica are seen working in Fish Brook removing branches, logs and debris from a huge tree that went down and partially blocked the river. They were knee deep in the water removing logs and opening the river. Photo by Buzz Stapczynski

- 1 **Bonier Reservation** Boy Scouts are building boardwalks.
- 2 **Burns Reservation** A tree came down on a bench and it was replaced with a new one. Planted trees had flagging placed with the tree name on them. Wardens Seth and Ann led hikes on Ballardvale Day.
- 3 **Burns Reservation** A Honda lawnmower was donated for use on the trails.
- 4 **Collins Reservation** A Boy Scout built a boardwalk leading into the reservation.
- 5 **Deer Jump Reservation** This reservation has more maintenance to do than most reservations and the wardens are doing a great job keeping it clear. Thanks to Rich Bizzozero for cutting up many of the downed trees.
- 6 **Deer Jump** Volunteer Stephen Dargie brush mowed the Jillian Loop Trail.
- 7 **Deer Jump** Wardens and other volunteers remove trash from the river. Kudos to Chris Grobiki for his leadership in the clean ups.
- 8 **Goldsmith Woodlands** The Andover Youth Services group removed cut up logs and branches from the wetland restoration project.
- 9 **Goldsmith Woodlands** Three yards of gravel was replaced in the parking lot where the storms eroded the gravel into the wetlands. The crushed gravel was donated by Benevento and donated delivery by Tim Rockwell.
- 10 **Goldsmith Woodlands** Willow Cheeley is doing a great job leading the Goldsmith Wetlands Project.
- 11 **Hammond Reservation** Beavers have flooded the boardwalk to the Town's Mary French Reservation and flooded the dike so badly that we must abandon the dike as a walkway, build a 500 ft. boardwalk, install another beaver device and a few 12' boardwalks.
- 12 **Lupine Reservation** A volunteer brush-mowed the trail.
- 13 **Purdon Reservation** The South Church Youth Group trimmed the trails.
- 14 **Rafton Reservation** Warden David Poirier continues to keep the reservation open and cut downed trees from trails on other reservations.
- 15 **Sanborn Reservation** Burt Batcheller and Bob Rauseo have met with the State Herpetologist Mike Jones and are now tracking endangered species.
- 16 **Shawsheen River Reservation** Dick Dillon replaced some of the boardwalk boards at the end of the meadow.
- 17 **Sherman Reservation** Patrick O'Hagan mowed the meadow.
- 18 **Skug River and Hammond reservations** student volunteer Brandon Zhao collected trash throughout the summer.
- 19 **Skug River Reservation** The Hornidge Bridge was underwater due to beaver flooding. David Bunting built a boardwalk on top of it

- 20 **Smith Reservation** With Warden Mike Timko, Ranger Dennis Crispo trimmed the new trail to Starr Ave. and the Andover Youth Services group helped. Crushed gravel was donated by Benevento and donated delivery by Tim Rockwell. The Lindsey Loop trail was brush mowed.
- 21 **Stanley Reservation** A bench made by Burt Batcheller was installed in memory of Warden Emily Trespas. Ranger Dennis Crispo trimmed the trails. A Faith Lutheran Church work party with Ame Matuza trimmed the trails with Warden Mark Cutler.
- 22 **Sunset Rock Reservation:** Ben Green with Dennis Crispo's help is cutting a new trail.
- 23 **Vale Reservation** Warden Ken Doran cleared the lower grown-in trails and led a hike on Ballardvale Day.
- 24 **West Parish Meadow** A South Church work party with Mary Pritchard trimmed the edges of the meadow with Warden Lew Trumbore.
- 25 **Levesque Tree** cut down trees at the Smith Reservation, Goldsmith Woodlands, and Indian Ridge.
- 26 **Tim Rockwell** mowed the meadows at Deer Jump, Keck, West Parish Meadow, and Shawsheen River reservations.



Miles Fraser, Troop 79, constructed an 88 ft. boardwalk on the Nat Smith Reservation for his Eagle Scout Project as the winter became harsh and he had to work around several storms. Photo by Buzz Stapczynski.

AVIS President's Letter

By John P. Hess



We are well into another calendar year and AVIS continues to see heavy usage of its trails. And, we continue to get accolades for the excellent condition of our reservations and our trails. I have completed the

Andover 375th Challenge by hiking all 20 reservations on the list. Now I plan to walk all the AVIS trails. I hope you will join me in completing the 375th Challenge. While doing so I try to remember that hundreds/thousands of years ago, indigenous people walked those same areas and viewed the same rivers and streams.

AVIS volunteers, led by Burt Bacheller and David Bunting, worked with the Town Conservation Commission in the early winter to obtain permission to breach a beaver dam in the Hammond Reservation. This was necessary to install a beaver device in order to lower the water in the Hammond and Mary French Reservations. We met with many neighbors who felt their septic systems were in danger. We also obtained support from the Appalachian Mountain Club because the Bay Circuit Trail goes through that area and is under water in some places.

Volunteers continue to excel in support of AVIS land, whether it is the work of the Weed Warriors to attack invasive plants; the new technologies such as our blog and our app; or regular trail maintenance; we owe a great THANK YOU to our volunteers.

During 2021 the AVIS Trustees conducted a Strategic Planning process in order to help guide us in the coming years. It was an extremely beneficial effort and much credit goes to Jim Sutton for leading us through this effort. We also had the able assistance of a consultant, Robb Johnson. The goals for the coming year are printed elsewhere. We welcome any input you may have.

Speaking of invasive species, insects such as the emerald ash borer and deer ticks have been on the rise as well as invasive plants. A recent study published in the journal *Climate* shows that Massachusetts is warming even faster than the rest of New England, having a dramatic effect on the ecosystem.

Thank you for your continued support and help in dealing with these challenging issues. You may donate to AVIS through our website or by sending a check. There are also many opportunities to volunteer, not just on work parties but on social media or other activities. If you have some free time, please let me know. I welcome your ideas and your efforts.

Healing Power of Nature

By Bill Cogswell

Dear AVIS,

First of all, thank you very much for all the work you do maintaining the wonderful AVIS properties. I have been hiking there for years, mostly near my house. I had a goal of walking at least parts of every AVIS reservation but didn't feel a sense of urgency. Then, earlier this year, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer, had surgery in August and likely will need further treatment going forward.

Suddenly my goal felt more urgent. Then a neighbor told me about your 375th Anniversary Hiking Challenge.

I had already hiked several of the trails within the timeframe and have knocked off the rest in the last few weeks.

I also became a sustaining member and intend to maintain that going forward. Thanks again for keeping the AVIS treasures alive. Their healing strength is very powerful!

Regards, Bill Cogswell.

14 Smithshire Estates



Bill Cogswell was the first person to complete the 375th Anniversary Hiking Challenge, hiking the main trails in all 20 reservations: 10 AVIS and 10 Town-Owned Conservation reservations. Cogswell shares: "I took the photo because I just love that Alice Buck was such an activist in the 1890's and a pioneer in getting land out of development and into the public domain. Her work was the start of all the wonderful lands we have here in town. I stop by her memorial frequently to say hello and thanks." Courtesy photo

Cameras Will Help With Herring Count This Year

By Ralph Cerbone Environmental Sustainability Intern

During the spring and summer months, many anadromous fish like salmon, striped bass, sea lamprey, and American shad come from the Atlantic Ocean to spawn in the estuaries, rivers, lakes, and ponds along the East Coast. One fish of most importance, the blueback herring (*Alosa aestivalis*), comes to spawn in rivers in late April to mid-June. The reason why this species and others similar to it, such as the other river herring species alewife (*A. pseudoharengus*), deserve special attention is that they serve as an integral part of the local ecosystem because of how often they are consumed by other organisms. Historically, this included humans who collected river herring for bait or as food. The Shawsheen River was once a home for the native species of river herring and after two dams were removed in the winter of 2016-2017, we have seen a return to their historical habitat.

Ecologist Dr. Jon Honea, an Andover Conservation Commissioner and professor at Emerson College, started a project with me, an Environmental Sustainability Intern at Andover High School. Our project's goal is to determine whether blueback herring are actually spawning in the Shawsheen River by mounting cameras to document any spawning behavior. Two to three cameras will be directed only at the river channel at locations between Central Street and Dale Street. They will be sturdy and weather resistant as well as temporary, only lasting as long as the migration period (April to June). A notice will be placed at the canoe launch near Central Street and the canoe launch at Dale Street. Secondly, we plan to construct a small trap to collect a small number of drifting eggs that would provide definite proof of spawning by river herring in the Shawsheen.

Dr. Honea will email past volunteers for the river herring count in March to provide information about this year's count to begin in late April depending on the weather. If you'd like to be included, please contact him at jon_honea@emerson.edu.

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AVIS
PO Box 5097
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For information about planned giving or stock donations contact info@avisandover.org. Contributions and dues are tax deductible to the extent permitted by federal regulations. Thank you!

For additional AVIS events see
AVISANDOVER.ORG

To check for other hikes visit
ANDOVERTRAILS.ORG

For AMC walks see
AMCBOSTON.ORG

The AVIS Update is a biannual publication of The Andover Village Improvement Society. The mission of AVIS is to acquire and preserve Andover land in its natural state. More than 1,200 acres of land are managed by AVIS and are open to all for passive recreation.



**ANNUAL MEETING IS APRIL 12,
7:00-8:30 P.M.**

Guest speaker: Dr. Ryan Wheeler
Director of the Robert S. Peabody Institute of Archeology, Phillips Academy

**"The Indigenous History
of Andover"**

Please sign up at AVISAndover.org
You can choose to join the Annual Meeting by Zoom either at home or at the Oak & Iron. Please see AVISAndover.org for more information.

AVIS EVENTS

Andover's 375th Anniversary Hiking Challenge

Join townspeople who are hiking 10 AVIS reservations and 10 Town-owned reservations, the main trail loop on each reservation, to celebrate Andover's 375th anniversary.

AVIS reservations: Deer Jump; Goldsmith Woodlands, Anne Rawlins Green, Hammond, Indian Ridge, Harold R. Rafton; Sanborn, Skug River, Vale/Shawsheen River, West Parish Meadow

Town-Conservation reservations: Bellevue, Carmel Woods, Doyle Link, Lightning Tree, Mary French, Virginia Hammond, Pole Hill, Poms Pond/Foster's Island, Retelle, Sacred Heart reservations.

Earn a special commemorative backpack.

Go to Andover375.org for more information on the project and to get a folder to download.

AVIS Annual Meeting, Tuesday, April 12
Go to AVISAndover.org for more information.



The photo was taken by Paul Dick, Ann Rawlins Greene warden, in his backyard across from the Burns Reservation. "These elusive creatures are all over the greater Ballardvale area including Clark Road, Banister Road, Hall Avenue and Andover St. "I have seen as many as five on a single hike on the Vale Res or gone for months and not seen anything," says Ranger Ken Doran. Photo by Paul Dick.

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