

# the Acorn

spring newsletter

april 2007

preserving the nature of Boxford for more than 25 years

## Letterboxing - Treasure Hunting with a Twist by Mary Ellen Iorio

A pastime that originated in England, letterboxing is an outdoor trail activity that has "treasure hunt" aspects to it. It's a lot like geocaching, only low-tech! It is becoming very popular on the North Shore, with many families already participating. Letterboxing is a great activity for individuals, families and scout troops.

*What you do:*

*Step One: Make your own letterbox*

Letterboxers hide small, weatherproof boxes in

publicly accessible places (like parks or trails) and post clues to finding the box online on one of several web sites. There are about 20,000 letterboxes currently hidden in North America!

*Step Two: Search for other letterboxes*

Go online to [www.letterboxing.org](http://www.letterboxing.org) and find the clues for a letterbox you want to locate. Bring your stamp, log book and ink pad with you on your "hunt." And of course, don't forget your clues!

Letterboxes usually contain a log book, a rubber stamp (hand made or purchased) and an ink pad. Finders make an imprint of the letterbox's stamp in their personal log book and leave an imprint of their personal stamp on the letterbox's logbook.

*How to learn more:*

BTA/BOLT and the Boxford Library Friends plan to co-sponsor a new, after-school program this June on letterboxing. Look for details at the library and in the school newsletters.

In the meantime, [www.letterboxing.org](http://www.letterboxing.org) has plenty of information to answer any questions you may have.



## The Eastern Phoebe by Mary Beth Stevens

One of my favorite harbingers of Spring is the Eastern Phoebe, a bird that typically arrives in our area around the first of April, give or take a week. Phoebes frequently return to the same nesting site year after year, so if one gets established around your home, there is a very good chance that it will be an annual visitor. They seem happy to nest near people, frequently choosing sites around homes, barns and bridges, as well as in hanging planters or window boxes, giving us a great opportunity to observe their nest-building activity up close and personal.

Phoebes are slightly non-descript in appearance, grey-brown and of a "medium" size. Larger than a chickadee and smaller than a robin, perhaps their

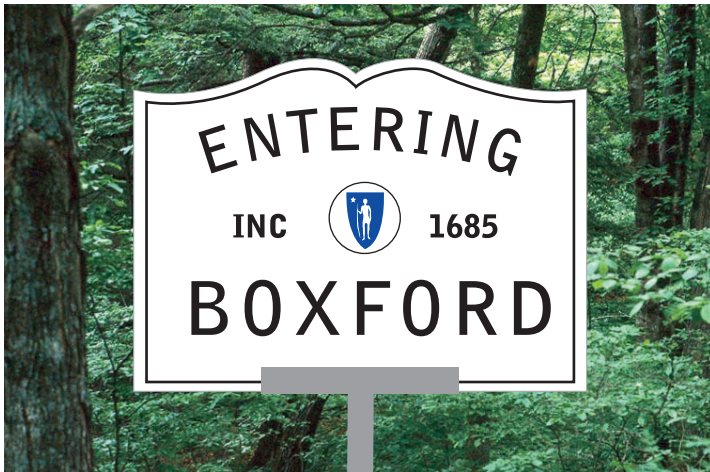
most distinctive feature is the energetic "wagging" or "bobbling" of their tail, apparent as they perch on a nearby branch or the ridgeline of your home, before darting out to catch their lunch in mid-air (they're part of the family of birds known as flycatchers.)

As is true with many birds, the Phoebe's name refers to the sound of their call, in this case "Fee-bee, Fee-be-lee." While you're outside doing those first chores of Spring, take a minute and listen for the distinctive sound of the Eastern Phoebe – they're telling you that spring really IS around the corner.



## Around Town with Judy

Having just had a wonderful, brain cleansing walk in Wunnegen, I think I have the courage to write my last Around Town article. After 10 years as president of BTA/BOLT, Forest has decided that it is time for me to step aside and let some new energy and creativity take over. Since Forest (the dog) turns 10 this year, we will retire together to spend our time together enjoying the wonders of Boxford's open space and trails. Actually, that is not totally true - Natasha Grigg will be presented by the nominating committee as president and I will be vice president. Since the Board decided to try to operate without a paid staff member, Natasha



## An invitation...

to you to attend BTA/BOLT's annual meeting, at Lincoln Hall in W. Boxford on Tuesday, May 22.

We will serve a light supper at 6:30, followed by a brief business meeting at 7:30. Immediately following the business meeting, a local guest speaker will give a presentation on watersheds and wetlands. All members are cordially invited to attend. Please RSVP to the BTA/BOLT office at (978) 887-7031 so that we will have enough food and drink for all. The following slate of officers and directors will be presented by the nominating committee at the meeting:

**President** - Natasha Grigg - 2 years  
**Vice President** - Judy Gore - 1 year  
**Treasurer** - Dave Ingalls - 1 year  
**Secretary** - Steve Davis - 1 year

and I will work together to handle the ongoing and new projects. We are busy reorganizing and getting Board members and volunteers to take on new responsibilities.

While walking in Wunnegen this morning, I was thinking back to when we moved to Boxford 16 years ago. Nancy Merrill immediately corralled me to work on the Open Space and Recreation Plan and to get involved with BTA. I owe her many thanks. What a fun way to get involved in Town and to get to know so many Town residents. BTA became BTA/BOLT and as the land protection projects rolled in, Boxfordites were so receptive that all you had to do was mention open space and everyone was completely behind you. Wunnegen came along and the neighbors came forward to help in every way possible - we had wonderful fund raising parties and yard sales and hikes. Everyone was so enthusiastic and what a worthwhile outcome.

So as we move forward into BTA/BOLT's 29th year, you can count on our continued involvement and enthusiasm in working to protect the wonderful nature of Boxford.

- Judy Gore

**At large board members** - 3 years:

Angela Stedman

Jean Dewberry

Alison Chase

**At large board member** for 1 year -  
*filling unexpired term*

Barbara Shade

*Baldpate Pond by Andrew Plucinski*



## Gardening with Native Plants by Paul French

It would be difficult to imagine what it would be like without plants in our lives. An area with plants, their flowers, leaves, fruits; and, even their shapes and colors all combine to bring us joy, comfort and sustenance.

Native plants are those which have evolved in a particular area; and may not exist in areas beyond certain boundaries. Because they have always existed in a particular area, all of the fauna of the same area have also evolved in close relationship with these plants. This relationship is very intimate and the very existence of plants and animals native to an area can be dependant on the other for survival.

Non-native plants are those which have been introduced into an area and have adapted to the new environment with little difficulty; sometimes with a devastating effect on native plants and even animals. Many of these non-natives have been with us so long that they have become accepted as native, such as Queen Anne's Lace and Ox-Eye Daisy. Others, such as the beautifully colored

Purple Loosestrife, have taken over whole wetlands to the point where native plants can no longer compete, and actually disappear along with the fauna that depended upon them for their very existence.

We can all contribute to resolving this problem by planting only native flowers, shrubs and trees. This is easier said than done because knowing native from non-native requires considerable knowledge of plants. Even many of our nurseries often are confused about the differences; so, it requires referring to specific books and seeking out those nurseries whose personnel have extensive knowledge. The effort will bring rewarding results and contribute to the health of our neighborhoods and natural areas close by.

In our next newsletter, we'll discuss some native plants that are very beautiful, useful, and beneficial to plant in our gardens. We'll also mention some plants (non-natives, of course) that we should never allow in our gardens. Some may surprise you because you see them everywhere. In the meantime, do your homework, and *Happy Gardening!*

## Cargill Property by Angela Steadman

Thanks to diligent efforts on the part of the Boxford Land Committee, and much patience and cooperation on the part of Bill and Alicia Cargill, the Town of Boxford now has a second opportunity to protect a critically important 14 acre parcel of land, consisting of agricultural fields and woodlands, located in the heart of East Village.

The attributes of this parcel are numerous. The agricultural fields provide a dramatic vista as one drives through East Village, and watching the fields being hayed through the years has provided us all with a glimpse into Boxford's agricultural past. Protecting this parcel will help ensure that agriculture will continue to be a part of Boxford's future.

The woodland portion of the parcel stretches 1500 feet along Fish Brook, making this a parcel of profound environmental significance. Protecting this parcel would be a natural and important next step in the ongoing efforts to protect Fish Brook, an important tributary to the Ipswich River.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

1. Attend May town meeting, and vote in favor of the purchase of this parcel. The purchase price for this parcel is \$775,000.00, with the money for this proposed purchase to come from the Community Preservation Act fund. Keep in mind that because Community Preservation Act funds would purchase this parcel, your taxes would not be increased.
2. Make a donation today to BTA/BOLT, P.O. Box 95, Boxford, MA 01921. BTA/BOLT is attempting to raise \$50,000.00 to defray the cost to the town of purchasing this parcel. If this parcel is not purchased by the Town, the donations will be returned.
3. Encourage your friends, family and neighbors to do 1 and 2, above. For the protection of this land to become a reality, we must all work together.

*Remember – the purchase of this parcel failed at Fall town meeting by only a handful of votes, so your attendance and support at Spring town meeting could make all the difference.*

# Earth Explorers - a BTA/BOLT Nature Camp for Kids!

BTA/BOLT Summer Camp

## Earth Explorers

- Who: Children entering Grades K-3
- When: 2 Sessions - June 25-29 and August 20-24
- Time: 9:00am -12:00pm
- Cost: \$100 per child; \$75 each for siblings
- Limit: 10 Children per session
- Please bring your own snack

Explore Boxford's beautiful trails! Search to find what flies, crawls, sings, swims and grows in Boxford. Each day will bring a new adventure filled with nature-awareness walks, crafts, games and movement. Participants will receive a complimentary camp T-Shirt and a copy of our family guide, "Exploring Boxford's Beautiful Trails."

This is a community-based, grassroots camp designed to help kids unplug and appreciate the tremendous natural resources we have here in Boxford. Parents are welcome to join us on the

hikes if they'd like to learn more about our trails, too.

REGISTER EARLY.  
EACH SESSION IS LIMITED TO 10 CHILDREN.



## Earth Explorers Summer Camp Registration Form

Camper's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade in Fall: \_\_\_\_\_

Camper's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade in Fall: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Town: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Session I (June 25-29)       Session II (August 20-24)

Amount Due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$100 per child, per session. \$75 each for siblings)

Return Registration form and full payment (checks made out to BTA/BOLT) to:

BTA/BOLT  
PO Box 95  
Boxford, MA 01921

For more information,  
please call the BTA/BOLT  
office, at 978-887-7031.

## 2006 Annual Appeal

December's annual appeal was a huge success, thanks to you! With the help of our \$10,000 anonymous challenge grant, we raised nearly \$24,000. Many thanks to all of our generous donors, listed below.

Rachel R. Achenbach

Edward and Sheila Becker

Lenore A. Boling, MD

Joseph and G. Ann Bonner

Stephen and Jennie Bridge

Anthony and Denise Brogna

William and Nancy Burns

Susanna Colloredo-Mansfeld

Joyce Copland

Joyce Curtis

Joanna Corrado Daniel

Benjamin and Patricia Davis

Jean Dewberry

Elaine Dole

William and Christine Dwyer

Edward and C. Jane Flanagan

Idilia Garside

Joanne Gibely

Bob and Judy Gore

Michael E. Goriansky

Jessica Grigg

Eileen M. Guerin

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Adam Hill and Kelley Morse

Michael and Karen Hoyt

David and Beverly Ingalls

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Phil and Donna Lacasse

Holly Langer

James and Lianne Langill

Susan Long

Nicholas and Diane Lopardo

John and Cynthia Manning

Thomas and Mary McCarey

Robert and Marci Miller

Dewitt and Lynn Minich

Larry and Tina Morris

Richard and Sherri Nagle

Ernest Nickole

Al Nierenberg

Gerard Papin

Michael and Kristin Patrican

William and Betsy Payne

Rose Phelan

Rebecca Potts

Kenneth and Carol Prouty

William and Marianne Quirk

Eugene and Kathleen Rabe

John and Kathleen Rehm

Peter and Kathleen Richards

David and Bonni Salt

Nicholas Senzamici

and Elizabeth Fragola

William and Priscilla Slade

Prescott and Sarah Smith

Robert and Lana Spillman

Timothy and Debbie Staub

Robert and Mary Beth Stevens

Andrew and Lisa Teichner

Mike and Bonnie Theriault

John Green and Laura Tilaro

Ernest and Kathleen Tremblay

Maria Van Dusen

George and Nancy Walk

James and Helen Wasco

Ralph Williams

Loren and Sally Wood

Nancy Woolford

Nancy Yastrzemski

Camille Young

Our membership year goes from July 1st to June 30th.

Thank you for renewing and maintaining your membership!

### BTA/BOLT Officers

Nancy Merrill - Chair

Judy Gore - President

Natasha Grigg - Vice President

David Ingalls - Treasurer

Barbara Shade - Secretary

### BTA/BOLT Directors

Alison Chase

Steve Davis

Jean Dewberry

Paul French

George Horner

Bev Ingalls

Mary Ellen Iorio

Andrew Plucinski

Angela Steadman

Mary Beth Stevens

### BTA/BOLT Staff

Ralph Abruzese - Trail Steward

Attention all walkers, equestrians and mountain-bikers: Please be careful of the trails during our soggy spring weather. It is easy to do damage when things are wet, so we ask you to please exercise thoughtfulness in your trail usage until things dry out a bit more.

- Thank you!

Boxford Trails Association/Boxford Open Land Trust is a volunteer private, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to preserving and protecting natural and aesthetically important land and wildlife habitat, including fields, forests, wetlands, and trails to preserve the nature of Boxford. Founded in 1978, BTA/BOLT has helped protect over 100 miles of trails and over 1,200 acres of land and is supported by your membership and contributions.

## BTA/BOLT 2007 Spring Hike Schedule Tuesday Mornings

### April

4/24/07 - Chapman Way. Park next to cemetery in East Boxford center.

### May

5/1/07 - Wunnegan. Park at lot on Crooked Pond Dr., which is off Moonpenny Dr., which is off Middleton Road.

5/8/07 - Shaven Crown trail. Park at arrow on the west side of Highland Rd., which is off Main St. in West Boxford.

5/15/07 - Winding Oaks Trail. Take Main St. to Towne Rd., then left on Winding oaks, park at #30.

5/22/07 - Maudsley State Park. Route 95N to 133. Left on 133, then 4th right on Gypsy/Hoyt's Lane to end and parking lot.

### June

6/5/07 - Heron Rookery. Meet at end of Hovey's Pond Rd., which is off Lakeshore Rd. in W. Boxford.

6/12/07 - Wheeler Conservation Area. Take Lilly Pond Rd. (across from Far Corner Golf Course) . Go past the Haverhill line to sign and parking area on left.

6/19/07 - Lord Woodlot. Lawrence Rd. opposite mailbox #78A, at gate. Lawrence is off Main St. in E. Boxford.

Meet at trailhead at 9:15 a.m  
(Please note the time change)

Call a friend to carpool

Hikes last 1.5-2 hours

Heavy rain or snow cancels

Bring water or snacks if desired  
and wear comfortable hiking shoes

BTA/BOLT is a member of the  
Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition,  
the Land Trust Alliance, and the Bay  
Circuit Alliance.

Call the BTA/BOLT office  
at 978-887-7031 with  
any questions

Tuesday Hikes: leader Steve Davis  
at 978-352-2250  
or sad.md@comcast.net

### Boxford Trails Association/ Boxford Open Land Trust



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