



Weston Forest and Trail Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 665
Weston, MA 02493

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Trail Markers

Weston Forest and Trail Association

Dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of open space in Weston

WestonForestTrail.org

WFTA Annual Meeting — Sunday May 5, 2024, 4 PM

Join us for our 68th Annual Meeting and a special presentation by Michael Pappone on the birds of Weston. The meeting will be held at the Scout House on School Street. More information is available at WestonForestTrail.org.

Michael Pappone

Weston's Wonderful Birds!

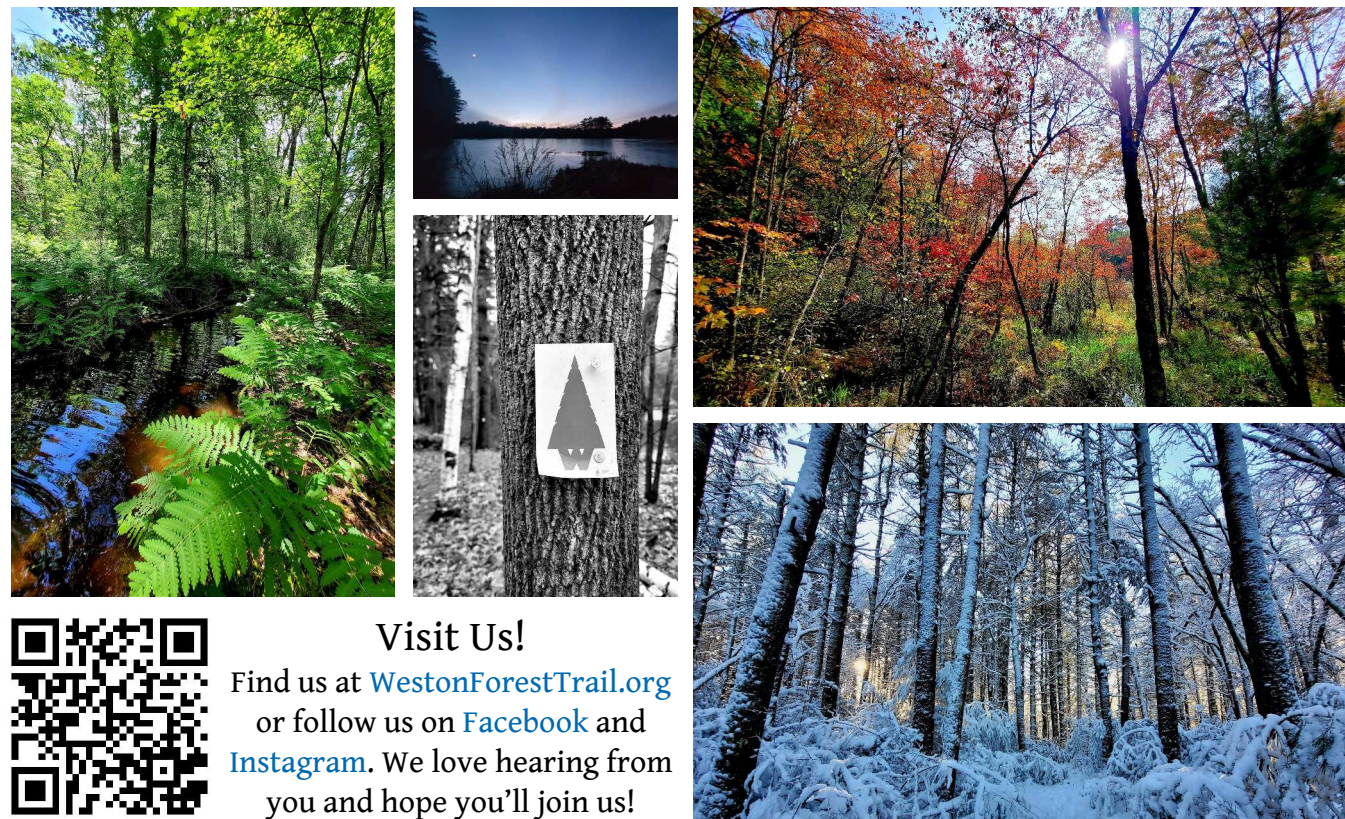
Weston offers over 2000 acres of open space, which is about 30% of its total area. Hundreds of species of plants and animals of all kinds call these lands home. Nearly 100 different bird species breed in Weston, and 100 more will visit on their way north. When the month of May arrives, bird migration will be in full swing, and watchful Westonians will enjoy their best chances of the year to see members of the zoological class Aves—some of the most colorful, tuneful and fascinating creatures—in all their splendor. You'll want to hone your skills and make your plans both to welcome back the local breeders and to wish the migrants a pleasant stay in our environs.



Michael and his family moved to Weston in 1982. Birds became a passion of his growing up in South Dakota and it has since led him around the world to dozens of countries. Still, it's Weston that provides the daily opportunities to follow the life cycles of our feathered neighbors, from the iconic Wood Ducks, Pileated Woodpeckers, Barred Owls and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds to the shy Brown Creepers and Ovenbirds. When not seeking out the Indigo Buntings on the Rail Trail and the Black-goggled Tanagers in Brazil, Michael spends his time serving on the boards of Mass Audubon, the Volunteer Lawyers Project and as a trustee of the Concord Museum; cycling near and far; sipping a nice wine with friends—and planning next year's birding trips.

Weston Forest and Trail Association has been looking after Weston's trails and open spaces since 1955. We are grateful for the legacy of fields and forests left to us by previous generations of generous land stewards. Please continue this legacy by [joining us today \(WestonForestTrail.org\)](http://joining us today (WestonForestTrail.org)) to ensure that this gift of natural spaces endures for those who will follow us on Weston's trails.

I have great faith in a seed. Convince me that you have a seed there and I am prepared to expect wonders — Henry David Thoreau



Visit Us!

Find us at WestonForestTrail.org or follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/WFTA) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/WFTA). We love hearing from you and hope you'll join us!

Land Stewardship

In 2023, WFTA stewardship took on a very wet summer that caused trail flooding including an impassable dam trail at College Pond, as well as the meadow grass growing almost faster than we could trim it. New bog walks and bridges were built at College Pond, Hubbard Pond, Highland Forest and Cold Brook. In addition, about a dozen trails were re-routed to avoid boggy areas and recuperate the wetlands. A new loop trail was created in Highland Forest to avoid a dead-end in private property.

2023 also seemed to be the year of falling trees. With 100 miles of trails meandering through the woods of Weston, a few trees fall somewhere across a trail every week, even without big storms. WFTA now has a new crew of volunteers called the “Red Vests” who are out on the trails in all sorts of weather, keeping the trails open. In addition to the Red Vests, every third Saturday of the month a group of volunteers as well as WFTA and Conservation folks heads out to some corner of Weston’s open spaces to tackle a trail maintenance issue. The Stewardship Saturday program is now in its third year and still going strong. Partnerships with local groups like the Boy Scouts, Regis College, Weston High School and the Cambridge School of Weston are also helping with trail clearing and creation projects.

Taking care of the trails should be on every trail user’s mind. If you see trash, pick it up. If your dog leaves a mess, clean it up and bring the poop bags home for disposal. Everyone contributes to the beauty of Weston’s trails, and everyone knows how to leave no trace.



Red Vests taking a break



Building new bridges



Community Service Day: Cambridge School of Weston

WFTA Junior Ranger Program Receives a Weston Cultural Council Grant



The Weston Cultural Council recently awarded Weston Forest and Trail Association a grant to expand its Junior Ranger Program. The Junior Ranger program was started as a way to encourage young kids to get outside and commune with nature. Interested kids complete a series of activities around some of the trails and open spaces in Weston’s Conservation land, share their answers with the program director, and receive an official Junior Ranger pin and certificate. The grant allowed WFTA to print Junior Ranger Field Notebooks with scavenger hunts, information about the flora and fauna of Weston, and tips for getting the most out of a walk in the woods while remaining safe. Go to WestonForestTrail.org to learn more about the program.



Get Involved!



Join us and the Weston Conservation Department on the third Saturday of every month for Stewardship Saturdays as we clear a trail, build a bog walk, remove invasives, beautify a stone wall, or otherwise improve our wonderful 100 mile network of trails on 2000 acres of protected land. No experience necessary.

There are other ways you can get involved as well: Lead a trail walk; help with our website, email and social media; work with local schools and organizations on trail projects; help run community and family events; “adopt” a trail in your neighborhood, and more.

Contact WestonForestTrail@gmail.com to be added to our email list of volunteers.

2023 Treasurer’s Report

| Operating Revenue | | Operating Expenses | | Membership | |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Donations | \$107,368 | Administration | \$6,448 | Individual \$1–34 | 22 |
| Misc. Revenue | \$912 | Community Outreach | \$5,744 | Naturalist \$35–69 | 73 |
| Restricted Funds | \$8,280 | Insurance | \$1,701 | Explorer \$70–99 | 36 |
| Total | \$116,560 | Office Expense | \$8,957 | Guardian \$100–249 | 156 |
| | | Restricted Funds | \$8,860 | Steward \$250–499 | 58 |
| | | Stewardship | \$33,966 | Trailblazer \$500–999 | 23 |
| | | Total | \$65,676 | George Bates Society \$1000+ | 28 |
| | | | | Total | 396 |

Donations in 2023 were slightly below last year (-5%), while expenses were down significantly (-26%). The lower expenses are largely due to replacing the Trail Manager with volunteers, and a reduction in Survey expenses from 2022. The full Treasurer’s Report is available on WestonForestTrail.org. The **Board of Trustees** continues to be very appreciative of the generous financial support given by the WFTA community.

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|-----------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Nancy Bates | Lelia Elliston | Bill Stevenson | President: Joel Angiolillo |
| Marty Carlock | Victoria Gifford | Craig Tanney | Treasurer: David Banks |
| Ted Cavan | Meg Kelly – Past President | Jenna Vettel | Secretary: Jennifer Potter |
| Diana Chaplin | Mary Ann Pappanikou | Peter Wheeler | VP Stewardship: Kristin Barbieri |
| John Connolly | Bernie Scozzafava | Ann Wiedie | VP Trails: Chris Jylkka |
| Samantha Cooper | Tom Seeman | | VP Outreach: Gail Palmer |

Keep in Touch with Weston Forest & Trail!

- Follow us on [Instagram \(westonforestandtrail\)](https://www.instagram.com/westonforestandtrail) and [Facebook \(Weston Forest and Trail Association – WFTA\)](https://www.facebook.com/WestonForestandTrailAssociation)
- Check out what we are up to by visiting WestonForestTrail.org
- Sign up for our monthly newsletter (at WestonForestTrail.org/about, or inquire at WestonForestTrail@gmail.com)
- Volunteer — we welcome both short- and long-term commitments
- And, of course, become a member!

Weston Forest and Trail Association, Inc. — Annual Membership Dues

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Select a membership level: \$35 Naturalist \$250 Steward Other _____

\$70 Explorer \$500 Trailblazer

\$100 Guardian \$1000 George Bates Society

Find yourself in Nature



I don’t mind getting lost now and then. Maps don’t know everything. — Ruth Feldman