



# The Boyden Bulletin

## Fall 2022

Vol. 10 No. 3



## HAPPENINGS

During the **Spring and Summer, 2022**, the FOBR Board of Directors discussed many ideas and plans at the monthly Board meetings. The members talked about how to improve the fencing at the back of the picnic area, replacing the sign at the entrance to the Boyden Refuge on Cohannet Street, addressing the erosion around the A.C. Bent cabin, mowing the meadow, and providing programs for the public on a more regular basis. Discussion about the new map which was started last winter continued also.

**Mapping** It was decided to create a new map of the Boyden Refuge. Dr. Boah Kim of Bridgewater State University was instrumental in helping to find a student with the proper skill set to accomplish the creation of a new map. During the **Winter 2021 through Spring and Summer 2022**, Joe Osborne, a graduate student at BSU, created a new detailed map of the Boyden Refuge. Board member Dan Rezendes was his FOBR consultant during this process. The map includes points of interest, mileage and is available online. It was completed in July and is available on the FOBR's website, [boydenrefuge.org](http://boydenrefuge.org). A printout of the map was laminated and posted in the kiosk at the Boyden Refuge. There is a QR code on that map to allow visitors to download it to their phones or other devices.

**Fish Release** On **April 15** a truck from the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries pulled into the parking lot on the North Dighton side of the Draka Dam with about a thousand blueback herring. The three workers released the fish through a large tube they connected to a very large tank on the back of the truck. Three Board members were able to watch the process with a few other onlookers.

**New fencing** There was much discussion between the FOBR members and A.J. Marshall, head of Parks, Cemeteries and Public Grounds, about how best to replace the post and rail fence at the back of the picnic area. Rails were missing and it was not safe. The Conservation Commission approved plans to replace it in April. In **May** workers from Park and Rec replaced the fence with a four foot high post and rail fence. There is black mesh behind it placed high enough to allow critters to be able to go below it.

**Erosion at the dam** In the fall of 2021, Kate McPherson of Save the Bay and Brad Chase of the MADMF noted that after the fish ladder was constructed in 2019, the area on the northern bank of the river at the dam was not replanted with trees and shrubs that had been growing there. This caused erosion and sand to collect at the bottom of the fish ladder. This **May** small trees, shrubs and grasses that will form deep roots quickly were planted to help prevent further erosion.



### **Happenings continued...**

**A.C. Bent Awards** On **May 9**, recipients of the A.C. Bent Award were recognized at a ceremony at City Hall by the Taunton Conservation Commission. The award is given yearly to someone who best exemplifies the spirit and dedication of Arthur Bent in advancing our knowledge, appreciation, and protection of wildlife, natural resources, and conservation. They were: 2014 - Donald Gregg; 2015 - Louis Robino; 2016 - Richard Paulson; 2017 - Neil Kelly; 2018 - Cathal O'Brien; 2019 - Marilyn Greene; 2020 - Marla Isaac. FOBR Board members and family members of the recipients attended the ceremony. President of FOBR Margaret Travis was nominated and voted as the recipient of the 2021 Award. Margaret has worked tirelessly for many years in several different roles for the betterment of the Boyden Refuge.

**Erosion at the cabin** FOBR President Margaret Travis contacted Ray Bradbury of G. Lopes Construction, Inc. to inquire if the company might be able to help out with the erosion at the top of the stairs near the A.C. Bent cabin. In **May** the company donated the material (crushed stone) and labor to do the work of filling in the eroded area. Leftover crushed stone was spread around the painted stone animals.

**TRWA River Fest** Members of the Friends of Boyden Refuge, Inc. Board participated in the TRWA's Taunton River Festival on **June 9**. FOBR's table included a poster containing the new map with a QR code so that visitors could download the map. We had copies of the most current newsletter and membership forms. We also gave out dozens of nature scavenger hunt bags to young people who stopped at our table.

**Program - Snakes** On **June 18** FOBR Board member Chris Rezendes presented a program at Boyden about snakes found locally. He led the attendees on a walk searching for snakes at the Boyden Refuge.

**Eagle Scout Project** In **June** Jacob Brennan completed his Eagle Scout project to refurbish the A.C. Bent cabin. With a crew, he removed the graffiti and repainted the cabin with special paint needed for the project. If he is able to raise enough money, he will replace the roof also.

**Program - Wild Plants: Friend or Foe** On **July 9** Ron Aakjar from Bridgewater State University presented a program about plants: invasives, wild edibles and more. He then led the group along the trails and provided information and details about the plants at Boyden.

**Girl Scout sign project** In **August** members of Girl Scout Troop 86107 installed the new metal signs that have been placed along the trail that passes the cabin and heads toward the Fragrance Gardens. The girls researched information about animals and plants that live at the Boyden Refuge and wrote an informational piece about each animal and plant. See article in this newsletter about this Girl Scout project.

**Program - Flutter & Squeak: An Evening with Bats** on **August 12** Maria Armour of Bridgewater State University, a bat biologist, presented a program about bats.

**Boyden Refuge Sign** The sign at the entrance to the Boyden Refuge is in poor condition and needs to be replaced. Artist Jen O'Keefe met with the FOBR Board in **September** to do some brainstorming in order to get some ideas about what should be on the sign. She will work on some designs and present them to the Board. Any design will need to be approved by the Taunton Conservation Commission.

## **Board of Directors**

Margaret Travis, President/Program Chair; Barbara Hathaway, Vice President/Corresponding Secretary/Publicity Chair; Carol Traverse, Treasurer; Betty Gregg, Clerk; Joan McKenna, Newsletter Editor; Dick Paulson; Chris Rezendes; Russell Spooner; Richard Easterbrooks; Greg DeMelo; Michelle Handley; Dan Rezendes; and Elizabeth Sisskind.

**Friends of Boyden Refuge, Inc. P. O. Box 247, Taunton, MA 02780 (boydenrefuge.org)**

## Happenings cont...

**Program - Eels** On **September 10** Kevin Curry from Bridgewater State University made a presentation about river eels found locally. He led the group to the Three Mile River to search for eels.

**Osprey Nest** Dana Sullivan built an osprey nest to be installed at Boyden. The nest is ready to put up. The TMLP has offered to install it. The best location must be determined before that can be done.

## Thank You to the Taunton Federal Credit Union

The Friends of Boyden Refuge, Inc. thanks the Taunton Federal Credit Union for its very generous donation to the organization. This donation from the TFCU's Community Giving Program will help to fund our programs that we offer free to the public.



## Summer Programs

During the summer, FOBR presented monthly programs at the Refuge.

In June, Board member Chris Rezendes gave a presentation about snakes. He passed out a pamphlet with photos and information about the fourteen snake species native to Massachusetts, half of which are found at Boyden. Chris described each snake, what it looks like and its habitat. Chris also displayed three live snakes that he had brought with him. He then led the group on a walk along the trails to search for snakes. After a thorough search, they located an Eastern ribbon snake.



In July Ron Aakjar of Bridgewater State University, an expert in botany and aquatics plant life, gave a presentation called "Wild Plants: Friend or Foe". Ron described many of the different kinds of plants and trees found at Boyden. He led the group on a walk and stopped often to relay information about berries and which berries are safe to eat. He also explained about fungi, various invasive plants found at the Refuge, and ways to identify local plants and trees.

In August Maria Armour, a bat biologist from Bridgewater State University presented a program about bats. She handed out a pamphlet with interesting facts and details about bats, the value of bats, and how to attract bats to your yard. She also dispelled common myths about bats. She brought a bioacoustic device which is used to detect bat signals. The event was held in the early evening and luckily bats showed up!

In September Kevin Curry of Bridgewater State University shared his interest and knowledge about eels. Endangered and protected, eels are found as far south as Venezuela and north as far as Iceland. Eels spend part of their life cycle at sea and the rest in fresh water. Kevin brought equipment that he uses to search for eels and explained how it works. The group headed to the Three Mile River, but was not successful in finding eels; however, we learned much about a very interesting aquatic animal, the eel.



## Girl Scout Silver Award Project

You may have noticed a new addition to one of the trails at the Boyden Refuge - metal signs with information about plants and animals found at the Refuge. It is the culmination of much hard work by Cadette Girl Scout Troop 86107 to complete their Girl Scout Silver Award. The troop is made up of 13 -15 year olds who were 7th and 8th graders when the project was completed before the school year. The Girl Scout Silver Award is a program in which a small group of Cadettes finds an issue they care about and create a project to make a difference in the community.

During the Covid pandemic, Cadette Girl Scout Troop 86107 met outdoors at the Boyden Refuge and at Massasoit State Park. Troop 86107 members are Mia Foster, Bea Glass, Mary MacDonald, Arianna Baptista, Marisa Fagan and Felicity Lebron-O'Malley. The group leaders are John Baptista and Heidi Lebron-O'Malley. Alanna Glass was the lead parent volunteer. Other parent volunteers were Erin Foster and Brian Foster, Leif Glass, and Valerie Fagan. The girls decided that they would like to give back to the community in some way and came up with the idea of placing informative signs along the trails at Boyden. They created a plan and appeared before the Conservation Commission to get their Silver Award Project approved.

Each girl chose two animals and one plant that are found at the Boyden Refuge. They did much research and wrote a description of each subject including interesting facts. Mary designed all the templates for the signs with the green background. Each girl added their information and photos to the slides. Felicity and Mia edited for typos. The girls researched the best company to create the signs for them, getting quotes from five different outfits. They chose Luka B Signs deciding that they would make the most durable and sustainable signs.

They then purchased posts and accessories needed to install the signs. Marisa used the drill press to put holes in the signs for adhering to the post. Arianna tagged all of the trail. Breydann (Bea) Emilia (Mia) and Mary used the post hole driver to set the pole. They then secured the signs to the posts. The signs are intended to last over ten years meeting one of the requirements needed to earn the Silver Award. They used the proceeds from the cookie sales of more than 500 boxes of cookies to pay for the \$450 cost of the signs and the materials needed to install them.

This project involved many, many hours of hard work. They came up with the idea, researched the topics, created the slides, found the best company to make the signs, shopped for the supplies needed to install the signs and then installed them. They persevered and got the project done! They are looking forward to planning new projects at the Boyden Refuge.

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**"Secretive Salamanders" A free hands-on nature program at Boyden Wildlife Refuge & Nature Park Saturday, October 8th, 11:30am - 1pm, rain or shine**

Land-living salamanders are one of the most abundant vertebrate animals in New England forests, and several studies suggest they are a crucial cog in a forest ecosystem. However, most hikers, campers, and other nature enthusiasts will never see one! That's because these secretive amphibians spend most of the day conserving their energy and moisture in underground retreats, emerging onto the forest floor at night to fill their bellies with insects and other invertebrates. Join salamander biologist Dr. Caitlin Fisher-Reid, Associate Professor of Biology at Bridgewater State University, as she helps you locate these hidden gems of forest biodiversity and learn more about their biology, behavior, and role in keeping our forests healthy.