



The Boyden Bulletin

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WRAP UP OF 2025

Eagle Scout Project

Eagle Scout Eric Rego wrote a plan in the spring for a project to improve the single track trails and blaze the trails at the Boyden Refuge. He presented the plan and received approval from the Conservation Commission. Eric completed this project in the summer. The trail map will be updated with about thirty changes.

Marla Isaac Education Center

In the spring of 2025 the FOBR Board started to have discussions about obtaining items from nature to be displayed in the Marla Isaac Education Center. This project was approved by City Officials. Chris Carmichael of the city Building Department was instrumental in obtaining and installing an appropriate cabinet for a display. Maria Armour, professor at Bridgewater State University, is the curator of the collection of natural materials at the university, which has graciously agreed to lend them to the FOBR. She will fill the cabinet with natural specimens such as skulls, skins, skeletons and other items. The display will be changed out every few months.

Programs and Events

In June the FOBR hosted a booth at the TRWA River Festival. We had information available about the events sponsored by the Friends of Boyden and activities to pass out to children. Also in June the FOBR held a successful meat raffle fundraiser at the Taunton Elks.

The Friends of Boyden sponsored five successful programs in 2026. They included a Maple Sugaring program with Ron Aakjar that attracted more than 100 participants. For the Snake program Chris Rezendes brought live snakes to educate the attendees and then led them on a hunt for snakes along the trails. Maria Armour's program on Bats was very informative and the people who attended were fortunate to see quite a few bats flying overhead. Next Sally Spooner of the TRWA presented much information during the Monarch Butterfly program. With materials provided, the participants went out to the fields and searched for monarch eggs on the milkweed. They were able to then take them home in the jars provided and watch them hatch. The popular program on Salamanders was presented by Board member Caitlin Fisher-Reid. After learning about the critters and how to properly handle them, participants went out on a salamander search.



Moving into 2026

Education Center The FOBR Board has discussed other new ideas for using the Education Center. We have considered having programs for small groups inside the building, creating a PowerPoint display with old and current Boyden photos which would run automatically, and providing a space with seating and equipment such as microscopes and magnifying glasses. It would be a place for Refuge visitors to examine specimens that they have found...**Grants** FOBR Board member Dan Rezendes met with Conservation Agent Jenna Freitas, Heather Rios, Taunton Grants Manager, and Jim Howland, of the Taunton OECD at the Boyden Refuge in order to assess the trails and areas that we would like to improve if we could secure a Massachusetts Trails Grant. All four participants agreed that the two main areas to address would be to construct a fully ADA accessible trail from the parking lot around the old caretakers' house and then down to the Fragrance Garden. The other area is the back stairway that goes from the picnic area down to the canoe launch number one. That one is a little more tricky because it probably sits within a restricted zone...**2026 Programs** New programs in 2026 include the City Nature Challenge, a global event, during which cities around the world collaborate to share observations of nature. Its purpose is to motivate people around the world to find and document wildlife in their own cities. We will have a Scavenger Hunt with teams going out to find items from nature. The Coexisting with Wildlife program will explore the biology and behavior of common mammals living among us in SE Massachusetts. During the Search for Spring Migrators we will try to identify many birds at the Refuge. Popular and informative returning programs will be Maple Sugaring, the Wonderful World of Bats, and Salamanders.

The city of Taunton's new Conservation Agent Jenna Freitas

Jenna started work on May 19, 2025 the day after graduating from Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts. Jenna spent a month getting on-the-job training with Michele Restino, who retired after twenty years in the position. Jenna grew up in Middleboro in a family home surrounded with goats, chickens and other critters. Always interested in animals, she spent a lot of time in the woods surrounding her home investigating and having adventures.

Jenna attended Bristol County Agricultural High School where she studied in a Natural Resources Management Program. In college, she studied biology with a focus on ecology and conservation. For the past three summers she worked with the Massachusetts Audubon Society in various roles. Jenna worked in the coastal water bird program providing the public with information about piping plovers. She also participated in searches for diamond back terrapin turtles, tagging them and looking for their nests.

As Conservation Agent for the city, Jenna has many responsibilities. They include enforcing wetland and conservation laws and reviewing development plans for compliance with acts like the Wetlands Protection Act. She must then conduct site inspections. As the Conservation Agent she also advises the Conservation Commission, manages permits and handles enforcement actions while coordinating with other city departments.

Jenna reports that things are going well, she is learning much, and people around her have been very helpful. Having always been interested in the natural world, for Jenna, being that Conservation Agent in Taunton is not just a job. The role fulfills her calling to work to protect our environment.

Board of Directors Margaret Travis, President; Dan Rezendes, Vice President/Program Co-Chair; Barbara Hathaway, Corresponding Secretary; Carol Traverse, Treasurer; Betty Gregg, Clerk; Joan McKenna, Newsletter Editor; Richard Easterbrooks, Web Master; Dick Paulson; Chris Rezendes; Greg DeMelo; Michele Handley; Caitlin Fisher-Reid; and Robert Carroll. Friends of Boyden Refuge Inc. P.O. Box 247, Taunton, MA 02780 (boydenrefuge.org)