Upcoming Events at Adams Farm
In these challenging times, the FOAF Board of Directors encourages people to continue to visit Adams Farm to get some exercise and fresh air and to reduce stress, keeping in mind the Governor’s directions to stay in small groups of 10 or fewer people and maintaining appropriate “social distance” spacing. We hope you’ll find time in the coming weeks to stop by the Farm and enjoy the arrival of spring.

May
TBD  Community Garden Opening Day
31   Cub Scout Pack 44 Rocket Launch (tentative)

June
6    Plant Swap (tentative)
20   Music in the Barn (tentative)

July
25   Music in the Barn (tentative)

August
22   Music in the Barn (tentative)

Plant Swap on June 6th
Kick off your gardening season at the 9th Annual Plant Swap. Assuming the Governor’s stay-at-home advisory has been lifted, the Plant Swap will take place in the pavilion at Adams Farm on Saturday, June 6th, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Area gardeners are invited to bring a plant and take a plant, sharing their extra plants, garden décor items, and gardening tips. Be sure to come early for the best selection!

Adams Farm Reflection
by Mary L. Wolfe, FOAF board member
As I visit the Farm these days, I am overcome with the escape it provides me. Escape from the tedium of being sheltered at home, escape from the doldrums of life under siege.

My relationship with Adams Farm is a lengthy one. Aside from being a FOAF board member, I lived across from Adams Farm years ago, when it still belonged to the Isaacs family. In those days, there were very few homes on North Street. My house, 1062 North Street, was surrounded by fields, woods, trees and some small pockets of water.

I have moved on and lived in four homes since being a neighbor to the beautiful fields once owned by the Isaacs family. My love of that property continues to this day. I walk the Blue Trail regularly, an easy, large circle frequented by many. I’ve ventured onto the Orange Path and experienced the lows and highs of the terrain, as well as the encroaching development on the boundary of Adams Farm.

I plan to hike the other trails soon to broaden my horizon which has been stifled by the happenings in the world around us. While I am on the trails, I will temporarily forget the news, the data, the fear. And with each step I take . . . move to a more peaceful meandering of bucolic Adams Farm.

Community Garden Plots Available
Currently, 4½ plots are still available in the Community Garden for this summer’s gardening season. Whether you’re an experienced gardener looking for a little more sunlight to grow your veggies or a newcomer to gardening looking to pick up gardening tips from your fellow gardeners, the Community Garden can offer you both a garden plot and a community to share your gardening experiences with.

To register for a plot in the Community Garden this summer, click on the link to the registration form found on the Community Garden page of the Adams Farm website (http://adams-farm.com/community-garden/). The cost of a 20x20-foot plot is $30.
Plots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Names will be put on a waiting list if there are more applicants than plots available. Just fill out the form, make your check out to “Town of Walpole – AFC Fee Account”, and send them both to the Friends of Adams Farm, P.O. Box 725, Walpole, MA 02081. Checks will not be cashed until plots are assigned. For questions about the Community Garden, please contact Barbara Johnson at magwanda52@msn.com.

Dog Poop Pick-Up at the Farm

Volunteers spent a weekend morning at the Farm picking up dog poop to make the Farm a cleaner, healthier environment for the animals that live there and for the humans that visit the property. A HUGE thank-you to FOAF board member Alan Marshall and FOAF member Mike Ekberg and his son Axel who bagged and disposed of about 30 lbs. of poop.

Bluebirds Return to Nest at the Farm

FOAF member Hans Luwald continues to take good care of the bird boxes at Adams Farm. This time of year, he’s busy cleaning and repairing the boxes so they’ll be ready for bluebirds, tree swallows, chickadees and wrens which begin nesting in April. This year he added another box off the Monarch Trail in the field behind the Butterfly Garden.

He has noticed some bluebirds starting nests, but others seem to have delayed the process due to the cold, rainy weather we’ve been having. In past years, the birds have laid their first brood of eggs during the first week of April.

Hans reported that the swallows are back, too, but they are usually a few weeks behind the bluebirds with their nesting. They can take their time, since they will have only one brood. In contrast, the bluebirds will have a minimum of two and sometimes three broods, finally finishing up by the end of August.

Bluebirds are very territorial. Only one pair will nest in a field, no matter how large the field is or how many nesting boxes are in the field, but they tolerate other cavity-breeding birds. Visitors to the Farm should stay at least 30 feet away from the boxes to avoid disturbing the birds nesting in them. Swallows will actually attack anyone who gets too close to their box.

Leave No Trace Hiking

with excerpts from “Ground Rules”, an article by Robert Birkby in the March-April 2020 issue of Scouting magazine

Even if you’re an experienced hiker, it’s important to keep the seven “Leave No Trace” principles in mind when you’re getting ready to hit the trail. The seven principles are:

1. Know before you go - plan ahead and prepare for your hike.
2. Choose the right path - travel on durable surfaces and stay on the trail to avoid damaging the surrounding area.
3. Trash your trash – dispose of waste properly; carry out what you carry in.
4. Leave what you find – take photos, not souvenirs.
5. Be careful with fire – minimize campfire impacts, gathering wood from a distance rather than from around the immediate campfire site.
6. Respect wildlife – keep your distance!
7. Be kind to other visitors – be considerate of other hikers.

If there are rangers in the area you plan to hike, take advantage of their local knowledge by stopping to ask them a few questions before beginning your hike. They’re likely to know a lot about the area, including seasonal changes that may affect your hike.

Decisions about crossing meadows, alpine tundra and arid lands are more about protecting the environment than protecting ourselves. Meadow vegetation can be fragile. Thin soils and harsh conditions at higher elevations mean plants there grow slowly. Many arid regions are covered with living cryptobiotic crust that takes decades to form.

Careless hikers can compress soils, making it difficult for plants to push out thread-like roots essential for nourishment. “Studies reveal that trampling quickly impacts plants and fragile soils, but recovery occurs very slowly,” says Jeff Marion, a Leave No Trace expert, Eagle Scout and adjunct professor at Virginia Tech.

“Stick to designated and well-established trails and campsites whenever possible, concentrating your activities on barren areas that lack plants and avoid the creation of new trails and campsites.”

Here’s a link to a short video to help you remember the Leave No Trace principles so you, too, can become a Leave No Trace hiker, leaving the trails the way you found them for other hikers to enjoy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pp4aqwE0pQ.

Half-Hour Hike

If you’re short on time, you can take a quick half-hour hike through the woods at Adams Farm by combining portions of the White and Orange Trails with the Blue Trail. From the parking lot, follow the Blue Trail for about 10 minutes. Heading into the woods, you’ll pass the Orange Trail on the left and a bench on the right. Turn left onto the White Trail where it crosses the Blue Trail at #106.
The trail next makes a U-turn to the left and then another U-turn to the right around a large boulder. Continue to follow the trail as it heads uphill to the left, watching out for large roots that crisscross the path. The trail soon levels out, meandering through low undergrowth.

After about 5 minutes you’ll reach #132 where the White Trail meets the Orange Trail. Turn left here to take the Orange Trail. Follow the trail as it leads gradually downhill and turns left, past a tree on the right sporting a large, rounded growth. Rocks on the path give way to roots once again, and about 5 minutes later you’ll find yourself in a small clearing in the woods.

Follow the trail across the clearing and downhill to where the Orange Trail ends at the Blue Trail (#104). Turn right onto the Blue Trail and follow it back to the parking lot.

A tree with a large rounded growth flanks the right side of the Orange Trail.

**Total hiking time:** 30 minutes  
**Distance:** 1.1 miles  
**Difficulty:** moderate

---

**All About Bats**

*Excerpted from the Fall 2019 issue of Explore, a newsletter for Mass Audubon members*

With all the vampire stories out there, it’s not surprising that bats seem a little scary. But there’s no need to be afraid of these creatures of night. Bats are really cool animals and they play an important role in nature.

Bats are the ultimate bug fighters. All nine species of bats found in Massachusetts are insectivores, meaning they eat insects. In fact, one bat can eat up to 500 mosquitoes (and similarly-sized insects) in one hour. And since bats can live in colonies of hundreds, thousands, or even millions of bats, that’s a lot of insects.

Bats are the only mammals that can fly (flying squirrels, despite their name, can only glide). Their wings are between 8.5 and 13 inches wide and have four long fingers and a short “thumb” with paper-thin skin stretched between them.

Bats have fur and are homeothermic, meaning they are warm-blooded and make their own body heat to keep themselves warmer than their surroundings. They can also save energy by allowing their bodies to cool while they roost during the day.

Bats don’t use their eyes to hunt or get around. Instead, they use their ears. Some bats have ears twice as big as their heads. They send out high-pitched sounds that bounce off their prey or another object and return to the bat as a vibration. The stronger the vibration, the closer the prey is. This is called echolocation.

If we can respect bats and keep their habitats clean and safe, they will continue to help the nature of Massachusetts.

To learn more about Mass Audubon and its wildlife sanctuaries, visit [https://www.massaudubon.org/](https://www.massaudubon.org/).

---

**Butterfly Garden Bursts into Bloom**

Spring is on its way, and nowhere was that more evident than in the Butterfly Garden in early March, as the snowbells and crocuses poked their heads up through the frozen ground, providing the first bright spots of color in the otherwise dull winter landscape. With warmer than usual weather last month, more flowers should be on their way soon!

**Time to Renew Your Membership**

If you haven’t already done so, now is the time to renew your membership for 2020! Your membership fee goes toward maintenance costs such as sanitary facilities, electricity, and haying the fields. It also allows you to receive our quarterly newsletters and other email updates about happenings at Adams Farm.

Currently, over 290 families are members of the Friends of Adams Farm. Please take the time to talk to others about Adams Farm and the benefits of open space, as well the many activities that take place at the Farm. Encourage your friends, neighbors and relatives to join the ranks of our members!

FOAF membership dues are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Level</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Larger contributions gratefully accepted!*

Membership forms are available in the map box at the Farm, in the Selectmen’s office at Town Hall, and on the
Adams Farm website (www.adams-farm.com), and should be sent, along with a check made out to The Friends of Adams Farm, to P.O. 725, Walpole, MA 02081.

Dedicated to the Preservation of Adams Farm

Adams Farm

Located at 999 North Street, North Walpole, MA
Friends of Adams Farm, Inc.
P.O. Box 725, Walpole, MA 02081

www.adams-farm.com  Follow us on Facebook