

# *Friends of Adams Farm*

## Newsletter

Winter 2021

Number 58

### ***President's Message***

The Friends of Adams Farm welcomed a record number of visitors to Adams Farm in 2020. I see this continuing into 2021.

The FOAF Board of Directors made the most of planning outdoor activities during Covid. The Walpole Board of Health and Town officials also worked to ensure that Adams Farm remained open year-round, dawn to dusk, despite the pandemic.

With two directors stepping down, the FOAF Board added two new members, Phil Dunkelbarger and Chris Gibson, who have become enthusiastic volunteers for our many projects at the Farm.

Your donations were used to replace the gates in the fence surrounding the Community Garden and to maintain the iconic white fences bordering North Street. To keep people informed, we've invested in re-energizing our website and are now on Instagram. Combined with our renewed Facebook presence, these media investments help everyone enjoy and stay engaged with Adams Farm. In addition, the Walpole Conservation Commission acquired land to grow the size of Adams Farm. More on this in the FOAF spring newsletter.

All this news shows things can get better, even amidst the most challenging year that I can ever remember. Events to look forward to in 2021 include a series of walks and talks by local naturalist and Mass Audubon book author Brian Cassie, more Music in the Barn concerts this summer, and continued trail maintenance projects to ensure your walks are enjoyable.

In closing, I've never been prouder of the work of the Friends of Adams Farm. Wishing you all a Happy New Year and many revitalizing visits to our special Farm in the coming year.

*Roy Noepel*  
*President, Friends of Adams Farm*

### ***New Nature Walk and Talk Series***

Last fall Brian Cassie, a well-known local naturalist, approached us to ask if he could offer FREE nature presentations at Adams Farm. Working together with him, FOAF has come up with a series of Nature Walk and Talk programs that will be offered monthly from May through September. Topics will include bird song, butterflies, insects, wildflowers and owls. Each

session will begin with a brief introduction of the topic followed by a walk around the Farm.

Keep an eye out for more information on the new Nature Walk and Talk programs in the FOAF spring newsletter.

### ***Upcoming Events at Adams Farm***

As the new year begins, we invite you to come to Adams Farm for a change of scene and a change of pace. A hike at the Farm on a brisk day can provide a respite from being cooped up indoors and help provide a fresh perspective on the many challenges we're all facing these days.

#### ***January***

1 Community Garden Registration Opens

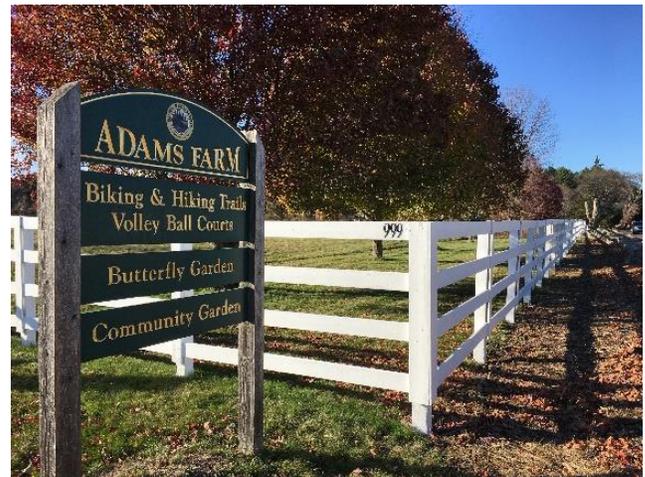
#### ***March***

21 Cub Scout Pack 44 Pinewood Derby

#### ***May***

2 Community Garden Opening Day

22 Nature Walk and Talk on Bird Song



### ***Fence Painting at Adams Farm***

You may have noticed that the fence along North Street is sporting a new coat of paint. Thanks to the efforts of a volunteer team led by FOAF President Roy Noepel, the entire length of the fence was scraped, sanded and painted in just a few short weeks this fall. Volunteers included Lee Leach of the Norwood Trails Committee, FOAF board members Phil Dunkelbarger and Chris Gibson, Chris' wife Allison Martinelli, and

Jack Wiley, FOAF board member and Chairman of the Adams Farm Committee. Also helping out on the project were numerous scouts from Boy Scout Troop 44.

### ***Annual Meeting Notes***

On Tuesday, October 20, 2020, the Friends of Adams Farm Board of Directors held its Annual Meeting. Board members Susan Packenham and Mary Wolfe stepped down and were replaced by Chris Gibson and Phil Dunkelbarger. Officers elected for 2021 were Roy Noepel, President; Craig Boulais, Vice President; Yvette Morrill, Secretary; and Dave Hoag, Treasurer. Other Board members include Alan Marshall, Fern Miller, and Jack Wiley, Chairman of the Adams Farm Committee.

Major projects completed at the Farm this year were:

- rebuilding the stone wall by the North Street entrance
- adding new gravel to the paths in the Butterfly Garden
- painting the fence along North Street
- replacing the gates on the Community Garden.

Projects for 2021 include:

- launching a new website
- sponsoring a monthly series of nature walk and talk programs at the Farm
- hosting a fall celebration at the Farm.



### ***Seed Library Update***

The Seed Library has a new manager. Liz McAfee, secretary of the Adams Farm Committee and a long-time gardener in the Community Garden, has taken over from Susan Packenham who started the Seed Library a few years ago and recently stepped down from the FOAF Board of Directors. Details on how seeds will be made available to local gardeners this spring will be announced in March to ensure that they

comply with current state and local COVID guidelines.

### ***Community Garden Plots Available***

Registration is now open for plots in next summer's Community Garden. If you'd like to have a garden plot at the Farm next summer, email [yvette@adams-farm.com](mailto:yvette@adams-farm.com) for a registration form. 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](mailto:magwanda52@msn.com).

### ***Erosion Control***



One of the many maintenance tasks carried out by volunteers at the Farm is controlling erosion on the trails. Uncontrolled rainwater runoff can do substantial damage to the trails. Recently, Gary Riggott, chairman of the Walpole Trails Committee (pictured above), and Roy Noepel, FOAF President, spent several hours creating a channel to install a rainwater diverter on the Blue Trail just past the point where it enters the woods. The new diverter made an amazing impact in just a short time. If you'd be interested in helping out with future maintenance projects at the Farm, please contact [yvette@adams-farm.com](mailto:yvette@adams-farm.com).

### ***First Day Hike at the Farm***

For the first time ever, the Walpole Trail Committee sponsored hikes at three locations in Walpole on New

Year's Day: Jarvis Farm, Adams Farm, and the Aggie School. According to Glenn Maffei, Vice Chairman of the Trails Committee, about 250 people went hiking at Adams Farm between 8:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>. About half were regular visitors to the Farm and the rest came specifically for the First Day hike. Of the First Day hikers, about 20 groups had never been to Adams Farm before. FOAF sends a special thanks to the Walpole Trails Committee for including Adams Farm as one of this year hike destinations. We hope this event will be offered again next year to introduce even more first-time visitors to the Farm.

### **Butterfly Garden News**

*by Roy Noepel, FOAF President and Butterfly Garden Manager*

The Butterfly Garden enjoyed a record number of visitors in 2020. Many area residents discovered Adams Farm for the first time as they searched for outdoor spaces to escape the confines of their homes during the pandemic.

Fall maintenance included trimming back many of the trees and bushes in the Garden and removing two invasive buckthorn trees. The trimming was extensive



and will offer a new view of the garden this spring.

A special thanks goes to Chris Galasso of G&T Equipment and Landscape for providing free chipping of the brush generated by the trimming, a huge help to our

clean-up efforts.

Based on the new open space in the Butterfly Garden, we may add several more butterfly bushes this year. The ground-level plants will surely enjoy better access to rain and sunshine now that the taller plants have been trimmed.

The gravel paths have been enhanced with a weed barrier and additional gravel, making them enjoyable to walk year-round. Take a winter walk now in the Butterfly Garden, and you'll be able to better appreciate the blossoms that arrive in the springtime. I anticipate this May and June will provide the most amazing show of colors in years.

### **Please Pick Up After Your Dog!**

When walking your dog at Adams Farm, please pick up after it and deposit the bags of poop in the trash when you return to the parking lot. Did you know that every dog produces over ¾ pound of solid waste and

over 7 billion bacteria daily? Besides being a nuisance, dog waste can make people sick, especially children who are more likely to come into contact with it while playing.

You CAN make a difference! Waste disposal bags can be found in dispensers located at the kiosk in the parking lot and on the fence where the Monarch Trail meets the Blue Trail before it enters the woods.

### **Reptiles and Amphibians in Winter**

*excerpted from an article by Chris Hirsch, Environmental Scientist, in the January 2018 issue of the Neponset River Watershed Authority's newsletter*

We have jackets, and scarves, and hats with little pom-poms on top to help us survive the polar vortexes and bomb cyclones that winter brings, but have you ever wondered what pond critters like frogs and turtles do to survive the frigid New England winters?



Reptiles and amphibians are cold-blooded, which means they depend on external heat sources to drive their metabolism. So how does a cold-blooded animal survive when the temperatures drop well below zero? Some of the adaptations they have may surprise you.

Being trapped under the ice of a frozen pond is likely one of the last places that you want to find yourself, but for many fish, frogs, and turtles this is exactly where they want to spend their winter months. Ponds very rarely ever freeze all the way through to the bottom which means the water under the ice is usually slightly warmer than 0 degrees Celsius. As the ice layer on top gets thicker it becomes a better and better insulator, making it harder for the water below it to freeze. This creates an environment that can sustain life below the ice. That being said, life in a frigid, oxygen-depleted pond isn't a walk in the park and these animals need to employ elaborate strategies of their own to make it through until spring.

Some aquatic turtles, like painted turtles, burrow down in the mud on the bottom of the pond or in muskrat dens for part or all of the winter. And while turtles do

need to surface occasionally to breathe fresh air, during the winter they are able to slow their metabolism to the point that they don't need fresh oxygen for months.

For those of you who paid extra close attention during biology class, you may remember that our cells create lactic acid as they break down more complex sugars into glucose, and without a constant supply of oxygen to complete the process that lactic acid can build up. Think of those sharp cramps you get in your side when you're running and your muscles aren't getting enough oxygen. *So how do turtles deal with all that lactic acid without a fresh oxygen supply?*

Researchers have found that they use their shells. Turtle shells are rich in calcium, so much like you would pop a calcium-based antacid to neutralize some stomach acid giving you heartburn, turtles adsorb part of their bones and shell to neutralize lactic acid build-up in the winter. Read more about it [here](#).

Not all turtles remain dormant for the entire winter. If you're brave enough to venture out on the ice, you may catch a glimpse of a snapping turtle cruising below the ice in search of lunch.

Frogs breathe differently than turtles. For the most part, aquatic frogs absorb oxygen through their skin. Because of this, they don't burrow into the warmer mud like turtles when they hibernate in the winter. They like to lie on top of the mud at the bottom of the pond so that they can still get enough oxygen to breathe. This means that they often need to be able to endure colder temperatures.

At this point you may be thinking, "Well great, they can breathe down there, but what's keeping them from totally freezing stiff as a board?" The simple answer is sugar. Frogs and turtles in this part of the world have adapted to the cold winters by pumping their cells full of glucose while allowing the water between the cells to freeze. The glucose prevents the actual cells from freezing, and special proteins in their blood protect their cells from being torn to shreds by ice crystals. This has given some frogs the ability to let

parts of their bodies freeze solid while keeping their vital organs protected.

While a frozen pond may seem like a desolate lifeless landscape at first glance, if you look a little bit more closely, you'll find that there's actually a lot going on under the ice.

For more information on the Neponset River Watershed Association, visit [www.neponset.org](http://www.neponset.org).

### ***Time to Renew Your Membership***

If you haven't already done so, now is the time to renew your membership for 2021! 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 300 individuals and 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:

<b><i>Individual</i></b>	\$10.00
<b><i>Family</i></b>	\$15.00
<b><i>Sponsor</i></b>	\$25.00
<b><i>Patron</i></b>	\$50.00
<b><i>Other*</i></b>	\$100.00

*\*Larger contributions gratefully accepted!*

Membership forms are available in the map box at the Farm, in the Select Board's office at Town Hall, and on the Adams Farm website ([www.adams-farm.com](http://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](http://www.adams-farm.com)

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