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Northeast Passages

From the Green Mountain Club's Northeast Kingdom Section

www.thecompass.org/nekmc



OUR PURPOSES

To maintain and establish trails and shelters in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont

To sponsor outdoor-related activities

To promote awareness of the trails of the Northeast Kingdom

To promote education about the environment of the Northeast Kingdom, including issues of stewardship of lands and wildlife

To make the mountains of Vermont play a larger part in the lives of both the Section's members and the general public

CONTACT US

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Where Wild Things Walk

Northeast Kingdom Section Hosts Sue Morse, Founder of Keeping Track

By Michael Chernick

When hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, or just simply wandering in the deep and beautiful forests of the Kingdom, have you ever come upon an animal track that simply mystified your wildlife knowledge? Are you aware that our animal population is more threatened than at any time in thousands of years? Have you ever thought of assisting in efforts to combat this significant problem of species depletion?

All of these inquiries were considered during Sue Morse's lively

slide and lecture presentation on the evening of December 7 at the Lyndon Institute Auditorium. After opening the program with slides depicting a Vermont with far more open space in the late 19th century, Sue lovingly described Vermont's current forest wildlife from bobcats to moose as "our neighbors" and urged that efforts be made now to encourage their survival. As Sue bluntly stated: if no actions are taken, it is not beyond reason to project the loss of 30 to 50 percent of Vermont's animal species during the 21st century.

The naturalist guide founded Keeping Track, a non-profit Vermont organization, with an urgent mission to preserve Vermont's biodiversity for future generations. Keeping

Track serves both as a wilderness educator and a critical wildlife monitor, establishing teams of trained volunteers in locales across the state to observe animal habitat patterns.

The Keeping Track monitoring process is based on a thorough knowledge of each species' unique footprints and scat. The evening's younger attendees excitedly



On the way back from Lewis Pond. Outing photo by Chris.

helped Sue identify slides of these visual clues: while footprints demonstrate travel and migration patterns, scat often reveals the animal's sources of nourishment. The accumula-

tion of this data from across the state provides a broad overview regarding the varying levels of success that different species are having in surviving. Based on this information, Sue then advocates for measures that may stem the threat to wildlife survival. Sue also brought an extensive collection of animal skins and remains for display.

Very special thanks are extended to our section's president and treasurer, Chris & Caroline Bechard, for the many hours they devoted to assure its success and for their contribution of a one year GMC membership raffle prize; and to anonymous section members who generously contributed local merchant raffle prizes.



SECTION LEADERS

Director - Beth Dugger
President - Chris Bechard
Vice-President - Daisy McCoy
Secretary - Michael Chernick
Treasurer - Caroline Bechard
Membership - Cynthia Barber
Trails & Shelters - Luke O'Brien

Publicity - Caroline Bechard
Website/Newsletter - Jay Collier

CHARTER MEMBERS

Chris and Caroline Bechard,
Lyndonville • Ami Bowen, Falls
Church, Va. • Nancy Bowen, West
Charleston • Michael Chernick,
Montpelier • Jay Collier,
Newburyport, Mass. • Barbara
Crowe, Craftsbury • Jon Day and
Cynthia Barber, Newark •
Elizabeth Dugger, Barnet • Jim
Fearon, Lyndon • Jean Haigh,
East Craftsbury • Daisy McCoy,
Lyndon Center • Sue Moore,
North Hyde Park • Luke O'Brien,
East Charleston • Mary Ann
Riggie, Newark • Alice and
Richard Robinson, Lunenburg •
Kathleen Sprout, Morgan

Events and Outings

Up-to-date event listings are online at:
<www.thecompass.org/nekgmc>.

By Beth Dugger

Storyteller Willem Lange says the happiest people in winter are the ones who get outdoors and stay active. The NEK section can help keep you happy!

Why not give a membership to someone you care about ... and help keep them happy too!

**Saturday, January 6, 5:00 P.M.
Potluck supper and business meeting**

At the East Burke Club House in East Burke village across from East Burke Sports. Supper at 5; meeting at 6. President Chris Bechard will demonstrate our new GPS equipment. Contact: Chris Bechard, 802/626-5663 <info@prbandb.com>.

**Saturday, February 17, 10:00 A.M.
Winter hike up Bald Mountain**

Meet at the Westmore town hall/office on Lake Willoughby. Snowshoes and winter gear required; some winter experience required. Moderate hike at easy pace. Rain or bad driving conditions cancel the trip. Call leader to register and for last-minute cancellation message. Leader: Dave Hardy, 802/244-7037 ext. 20 <Dave@greenmountainclub.org>.

**Saturday, March 10, 9 A.M.
Gore Mountain Snowshoe**

Meet at the Island Pond Depot parking lot. Difficult outing; snowshoes and winter hiking attire required. Postponed from January 6 for the sake of longer day length. Co-leaders: Michael Chernick, 802/223-0918 <chernick@together.net> and Luke O'Brien, 802/723-6551 <vlc@sover.net>.

We've had a few requests for a gentle, beginner-level snowshoe tramp. Anyone interested in organizing this? There are Boy Scouts in Danville who'd like to join us for what they call "snow walking."

Save a Tree

We are sending an electronic version of this newsletter via email to those who are willing to forego the mailed paper version. Please let us know if you would like to receive the "e-letter" so we can lower our postage costs. You will be helping us focus our financial resources toward section goals.

Also, if you are receiving this newsletter and are not a member, we will be culling our mailing list. You can be sure to receive continuing information by joining the section. You can find instructions online at: <www.thecompass.org/nekgmc>.

**NORTHEAST PASSAGES
Green Mountain Club - Northeast Kingdom Section**

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