

Be ready for the Bioblitz in June!

Have you begun thinking about which mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and insects make their homes in your part of Acton? During the next few “getting ready” months, you may wish to develop your naturalist intelligence by browsing field guides and exploring the library for books about a variety of wildlife animals, their habitats and habits.

Audubon and Peterson field guides are filled with excellent photographs and information. Maybe you will map your yard and plan to include native plants to nourish pollinating birds and bees in your spring planting plans. Nature art and poetry books may inspire you to create your own sketches and writings about your observations. The Nature Connection- An Outdoor Workbook for Kids, Families and Classrooms by Clare Walker Leslie is one of many of her books that foster curiosity and the significance of documentation of nature discoveries.

Naturalist Intelligence

Do you know a child who is a budding naturalist? Naturalist Intelligence is Howard Gardner’s Eighth Intelligence in his Multiple Intelligence Theory. Your student or child may be “nature smart” if he or she consistently displays some of the following behaviors:

1. Notices patterns and rhythms from their surroundings easily – observing likes, differences, similarities, or anomalies
2. Can pinpoint things in their surroundings or environments others often miss
3. Has a sharp memory for details, often observing and easily remembering things from his/her environment and surroundings,
4. Has keen senses (sight, hearing, sense of touch and smell, and may even have a well developed “sixth sense”)
5. Likes animals and likes to know and remember things about them,
6. Really appreciates being outside and doing things like gardening, camping, hiking or climbing, exploring, and even just like sitting quietly and noticing the subtle differences in the world of nature
7. Makes astute observations about natural changes and emerging patterns, natural phenomena, human populations, and the existing or possible connection or interconnections
8. Loves books, shows, or videos about nature or natural phenomena, or animals
9. Creates, keeps or has collections, scrapbooks, logs, or journals about natural objects — these may include written observations, drawings, pictures and photographs or specimens
10. Shows a heightened awareness and/or concern, even empathy, for the environment and/or for endangered species
11. Easily learns characteristics, names, categorizations, and data about objects or species found in the natural world
12. Often displays a sense of wonder, awe, or surprise for/about the natural world or natural phenomena.

(Source: The Work of Leslie Owen Wilson, Ed.D,
<http://thesecondprinciple.com/optimal-learning/naturalistic-intelligence/>

Nocturnal Animals on Acton Roadways

Nocturnal animals on the move crossing roads during late night and early morning hours include rabbits, foxes, opossums, skunks, bobcats, coyotes and raccoons. After the last couple of months of winter torpor and hibernation for wildlife mammals, February begins the breeding season, with litters being born in the spring months of April, May and June.

Common Wildlife Road Crossings in Acton

- Main and High Streets-intersection
- Great Road and Main Street intersection, especially across Great Road at Conant Brook and Veteran's Field
- Nagog Hill Road at Conant Brook culvert under the road
- Main Street and Brook Street at Nashoba Brook
- Great Road at the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (just west of Davis Road) where Nashoba Brook flows under Great Road
- Mass Ave. near Boxborough town line
- Elm Street at Douglas School
- Mass Ave. at Knowlton Drive where Fort Pond Brook flows under Mass Ave.
- Lawsbrook Road and School Street intersection where Fort Pond Brook flows under the road
- Newtown Road where Conant Brook flows under the road
- Mass Ave. at Guggins Brook conservation land near Birch Ridge Road
- Martin Street at Jones Field where Fort Pond Brook flows under Martin Street and Maple Street
- Pope Road near Camp Acton conservation land where Spencer Brook flows under Pope Road
- Strawberry Hill Road and Pope Road intersection

Contribute wildlife photos!

Keep your camera and smart phone handy to take photos and email them to nr@acton-ma.gov for our winter and spring wildlife poster displays at the local libraries. Post your photos on our Acton WildAware Facebook page or to our Instagram account!

Paula Goodwin is a member of the Acton Conservation Commission who introduced WildAware with Acton Natural Resource Assistant Bettina Abe. WildAware is a program sponsored by the Town of Acton Natural Resources Department that began in September and will continue through the summer of 2016. The purpose of WildAware is to educate the community about the existence and habits of wild creatures, and the goal is increased community awareness of shared habitats. For information, call 978-929-6634 or send email to nr@acton-ma.gov.