Hitchcock Center
EDUCATION FOR A HEALTHY PLANET

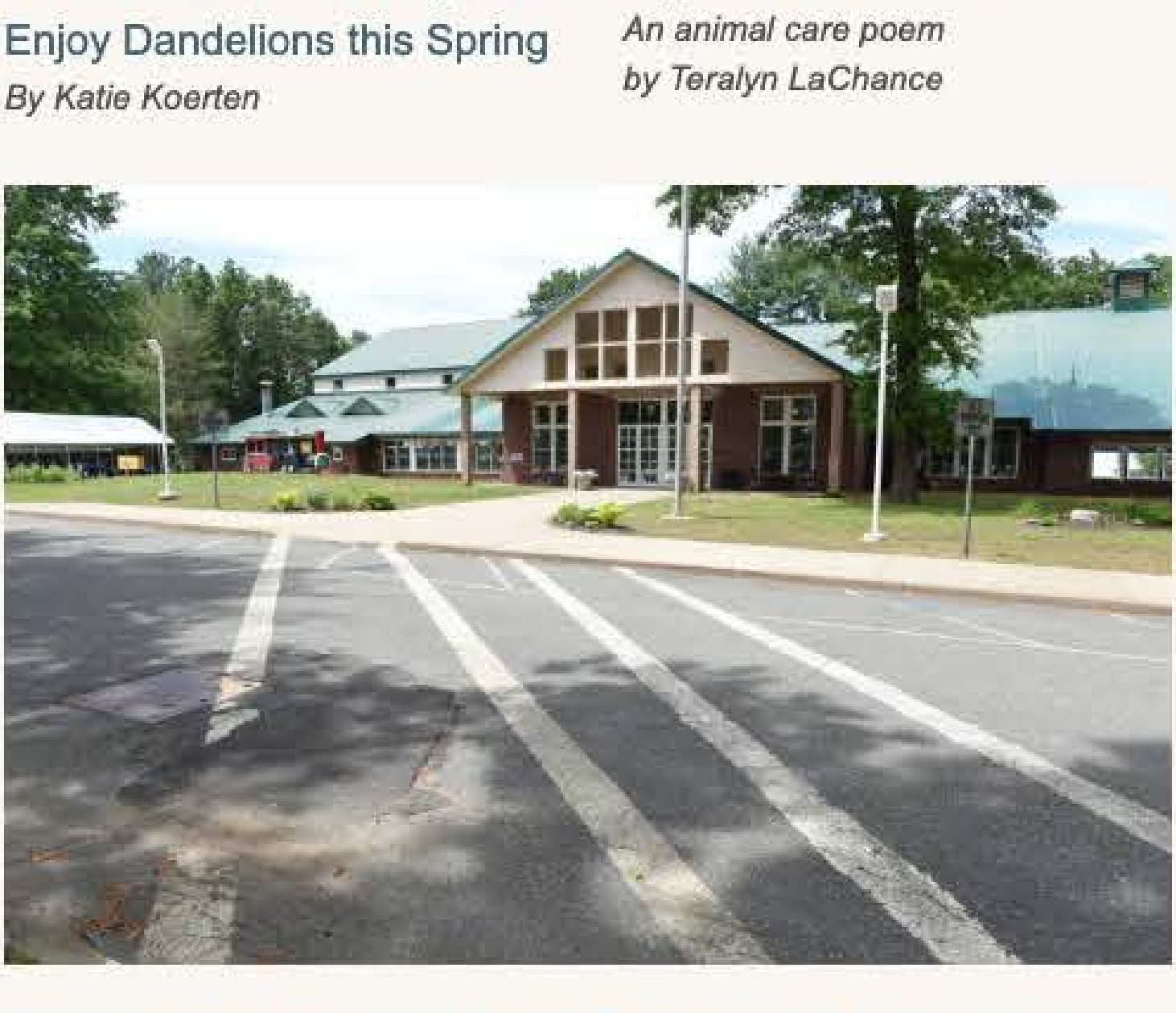
The Salamander Scoop

April 2023

Featured Articles

Earth Matters: Five Ways to Enjoy Dandelions this Spring
By Katie Koerten

Nighttime at Hitchcock
An animal care poem
by Teralyn LaChance



With climate education, Hitchcock Center looks to help children envision ideal world
By Julian Mendoza for the Gazette

Announcements

Flora and Faunathon 2023

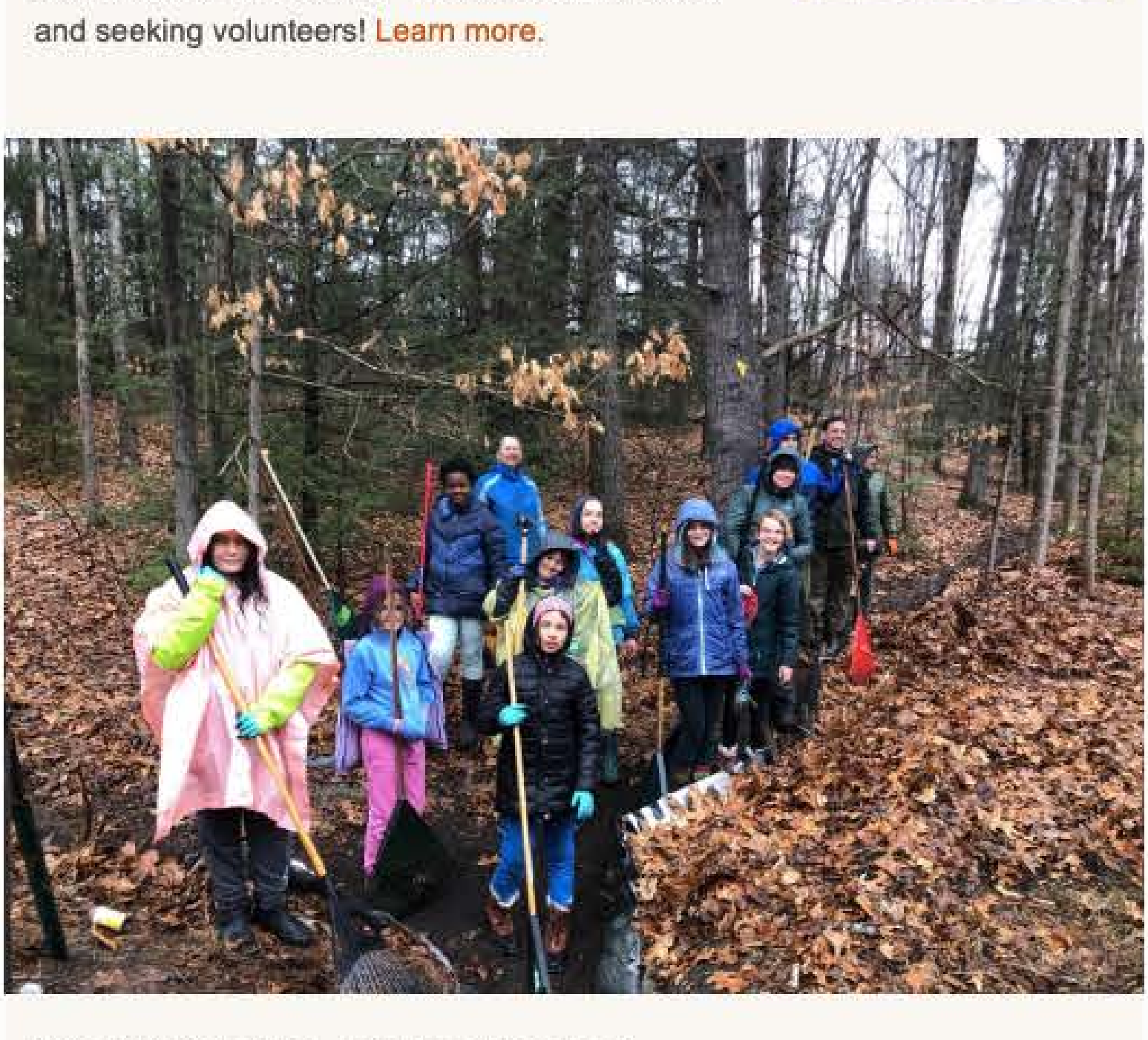
FLORA
FAUNA-
THON

Save the date for May 6 & 7! Whether you live in the woods or in the city, nature is all around us! Join us on May 6 and 7 and get outside to notice the wonder of spring; identify as many plants and animals as you can; share what you find, win prizes, and raise money to support education for a healthy planet! Learn more.

Eagle Eye Institute is Hiring

WE'RE
HIRING
EAGLE EYE INSTITUTE

The mission of Eagle Eye institute in Peru, Mass is to offer learning programs/opportunities for primarily Black and Brown youth to experience well being, belonging and empowerment through a relationship with nature. They're currently hiring and seeking volunteers! Learn more.



Big Night was a big success!

The annual spotted salamander migration across Henry Street in Amherst took place this year between March 23 and March 31. Big Night occurs each spring when spotted salamanders and wood frogs migrate from their winter woodland habitats to nearby vernal wetlands to breed during the first spring rains, after dark with a stable temperature over 40 degrees.

Pictured is our clean up crew at the Henry Street tunnels on Saturday, March 25, which includes UMASS students and a local girl scout troop. The girl scouts actually found a spotted salamander in the leaves during the clean up! Thanks for your help!

Hitchcock Center is grateful to the Town of Amherst for closing the roads on peak nights and helping us direct traffic. We had well over 100 people come out to see the amphibian migration on Monday, March 27. **It was so great to see you all, to have such great volunteers cleaning and monitoring the tunnels, and hope you'll join us again in supporting our local amphibians on their journey spring 2024!**

Learn more about the Henry Street Salamander Tunnels here.

In the Community Gallery

HAVE YOU SEEN THESE BIRDS IN YOUR BACKYARD?
SEE MORE OF SCOTT'S BIRD PHOTOS IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM

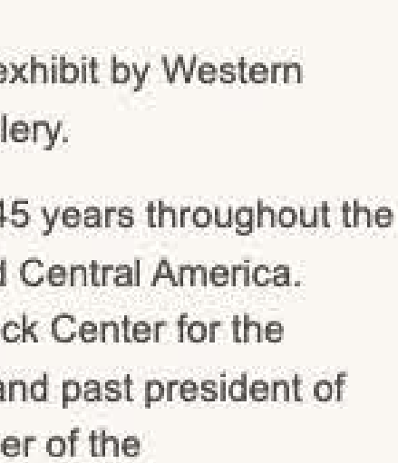
***Featured artist:* Scott Surner**

When you visit HCE, check out the new photography exhibit by Western Mass birder Scott Surner in our Community Room Gallery.

Scott has been studying and observing birds for over 45 years throughout the Connecticut River Valley, New England, and North and Central America. Scott has been teaching bird ID classes at the Hitchcock Center for the Environment since 1980. He is the founding member and past president of the Hampshire Bird Club (est. 1984) and a past member of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee.

Upcoming Programs and Events

Fireside Chats are back!



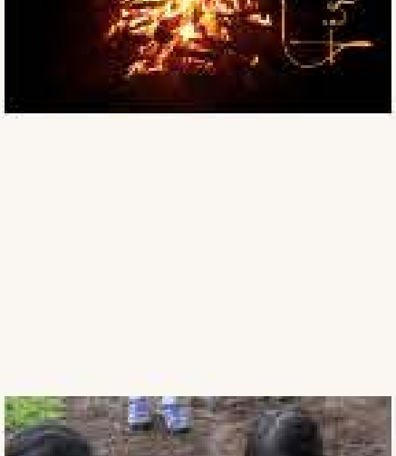
We invite you to join us at the Hitchcock Center's Living Building in April for our next fireside chat! Enjoy the beauty of a crisp, early-Spring evening and join in engaging conversations on nature-focused topics around a fire with hot beverages and hearty snacks.

Thursday, April 27: Stories of Indigenous Place and Spirit, with Nolumbeka Project. Register.

April Vacation Days

Spend your days off from school April 17 - 21 learning and playing outside at the Hitchcock Center! We'll explore topics in ecology while playing games, making crafts and spending time with our live animals. Sign up for as many days as you wish: Register.

Youth Climate Action Festival



Join YCAN and more youth-led groups in Western Mass on April 23rd for a day of creativity and community building. This event will center around two live music guests, a live dance performance, multiple poetry readings, as well as several youth led eco grief sessions and workshops. More info.

Peek at our program calendar for more!

The Salamander Scoop
In Memoriam

In the past year, we have lost three incredible members of the Hitchcock Center community- Marty Noblick, Marty Norden and Elaine Lemieux. Our staff and volunteers are a small, tight-knit group who share so many wonderful memories. These three people devoted a great deal of time and passion to the Hitchcock Center. Their talents and impact are deeply appreciated and they will be sorely missed.

Martha Noblick

Martha (Marty) Nell Noblick, of Deerfield, formerly of Amherst, passed away at the Baystate Medical Center in Springfield on December 14, 2022. Marty had three great passions: wildlife, libraries, and history. In 1971, she graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in Natural Resources. She earned an MA in history from the University of Massachusetts in 1984 with a thesis entitled "Amherst Soldiers in the American Revolution" and an MLS from Southern Connecticut State University.

An avid birder, Marty volunteered at the Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Amherst. Marty is survived by her brother John E. and his wife Roberta Watford of Medina, Ohio, two nieces, one nephew, and many friends. Donations may be made in her memory to the Hitchcock Center. Read her obituary.

Marty Norden

Martin (Marty) Frank Norden, 71, of Amherst, passed away on March 12, 2023. Marty volunteered at the Hitchcock Center for many years; caring for our Living Building, bringing in dead mice for our corn snake Cob, and told us he had given up his car so many years ago because he believed in our mission so strongly. Retired Hitchcock educator Ted Watt said this about Marty at a past Salamander brunch: "I was amazed by his commitment to what we do here. I learned that he was pulling poison ivy by hand from along the trails. Wow! This guy is a risk taker...He's been an Amherst resident since 1977, when he joined the UMass faculty. His children enjoyed exploring nature at the Hitchcock Center when they were young." Read about Marty's history with Hitchcock Center in his own words.

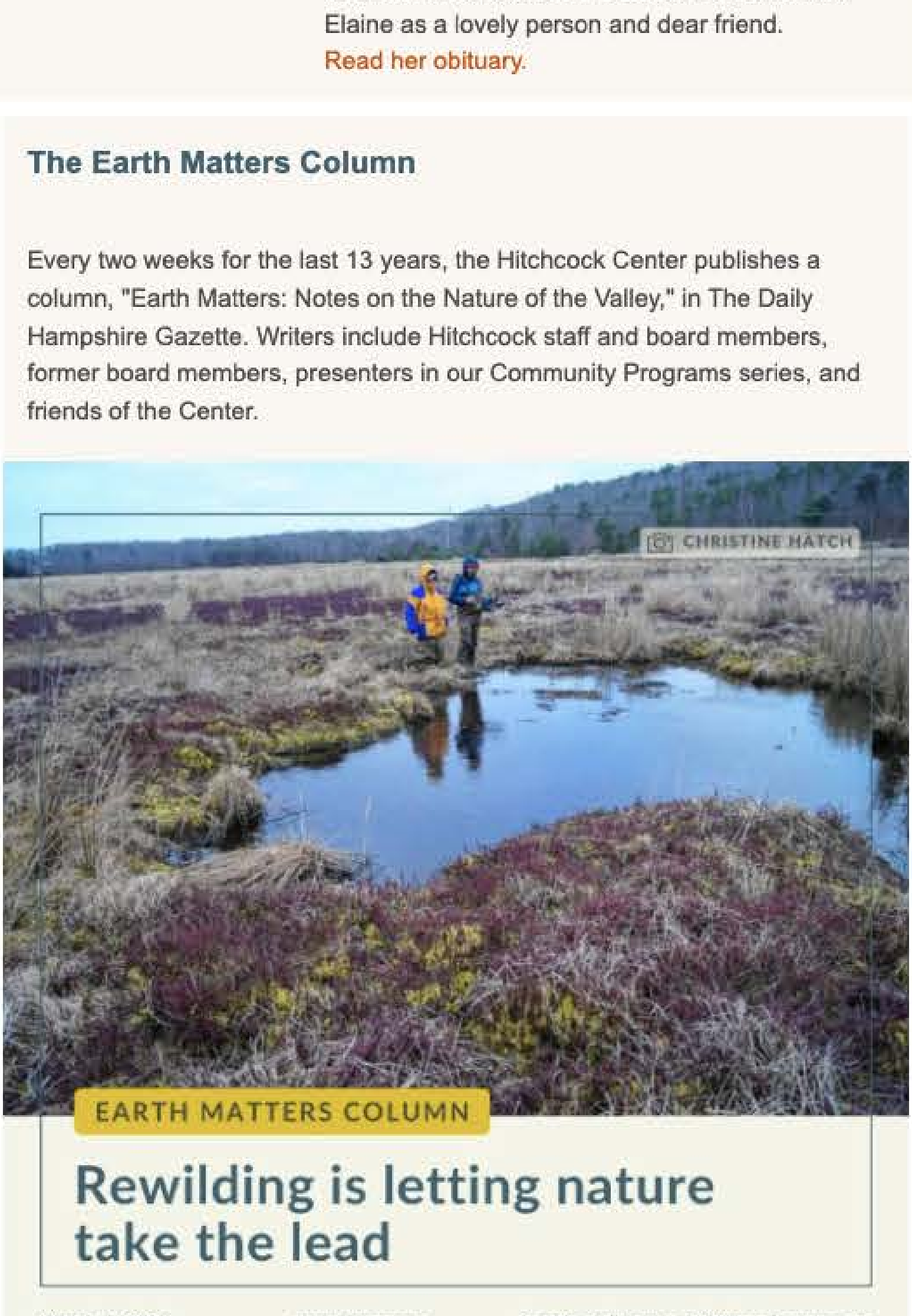
Elaine Lemieux

Elaine Lemieux died at age 75 in her home in Shutesbury, MA on March 8, 2023 surrounded by family, after a short battle with cancer. Elaine loved the outdoors and volunteered at Hitchcock Center since we moved to our current location in 2016. She was amazing with all of our indoor and outdoor plants; bringing many of them back from certain demise. She was diligent and hard working, a natural problem solver and always made us smile with her great sense of humor.

She worked closely with our Center and Volunteer Coordinator Teralyn, who learned Elaine had her own turtle at home which made caring for our resident animals so easy for her. One day Teralyn and Elaine had the idea to give the box turtles pieces of prickly pear flowers, and they both had thorns in their fingers for a week. We remember Elaine as a lovely person and dear friend. Read her obituary.

The Earth Matters Column

Every two weeks for the last 13 years, the Hitchcock Center publishes a column, "Earth Matters: Notes on the Nature of the Valley," in The Daily Hampshire Gazette. Writers include Hitchcock staff and board members, former board members, presenters in our Community Programs series, and friends of the Center.



CHRISTINE HATCH

EARTH MATTERS COLUMN

Rewilding is letting nature take the lead

March 4, 2023 gazettenet.com Get the full story at hitchcockcenter.org

Recent columns:

Picture books can enrich kids' outdoor experiences
By Allie Martineau

How farmlands can support wildlife, not just people
By Lee Halasz and Kari Blood

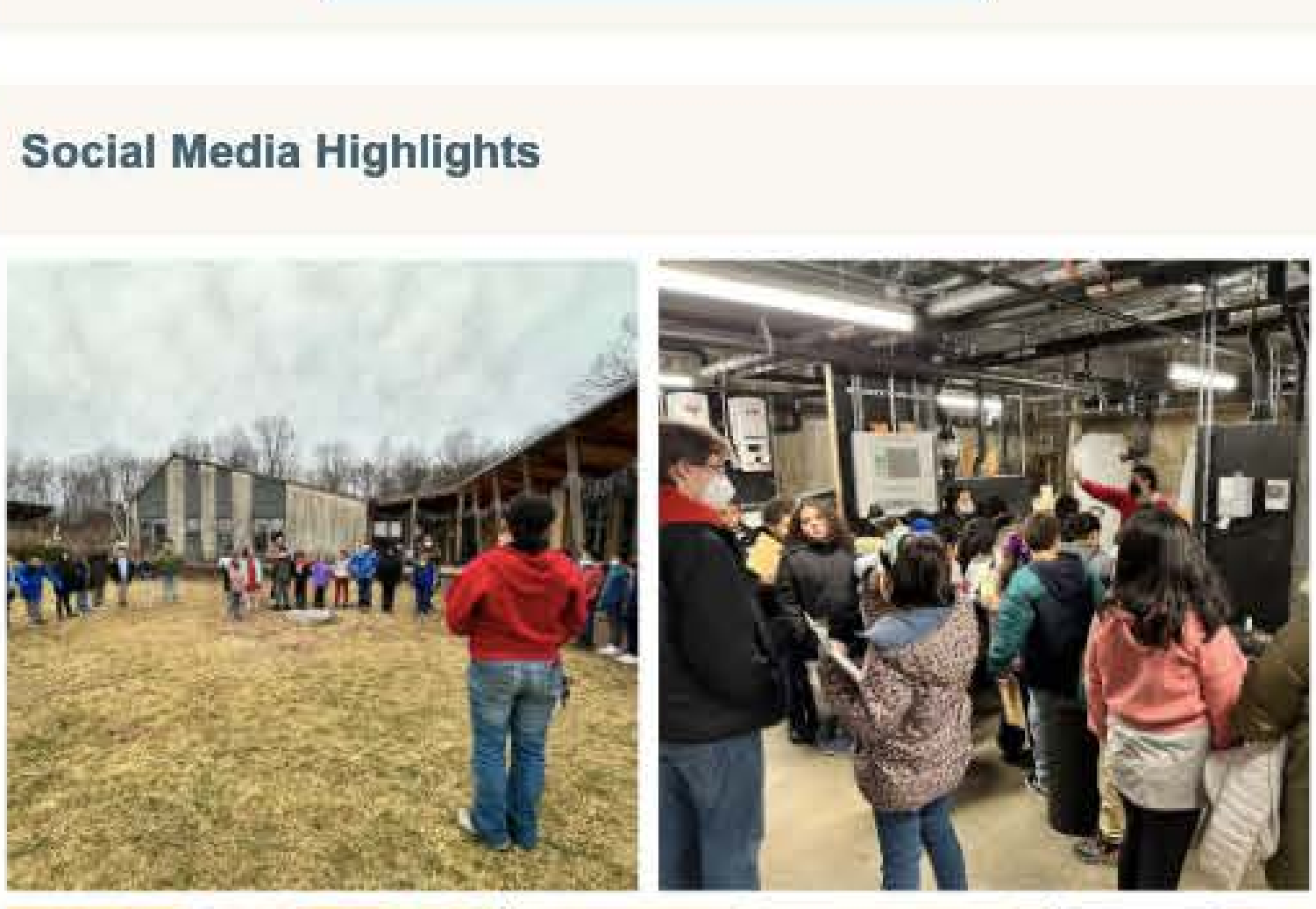
Bird joy as resistance in a troubled world
By Meghadeepa Maity

Mistletoe: It's not just about kissing
By Joshua Rose

Gay penguins, mutual aid and the myth of survival of the fittest
By Monya Relles

Explore more of Earth Matters

Social Media Highlights

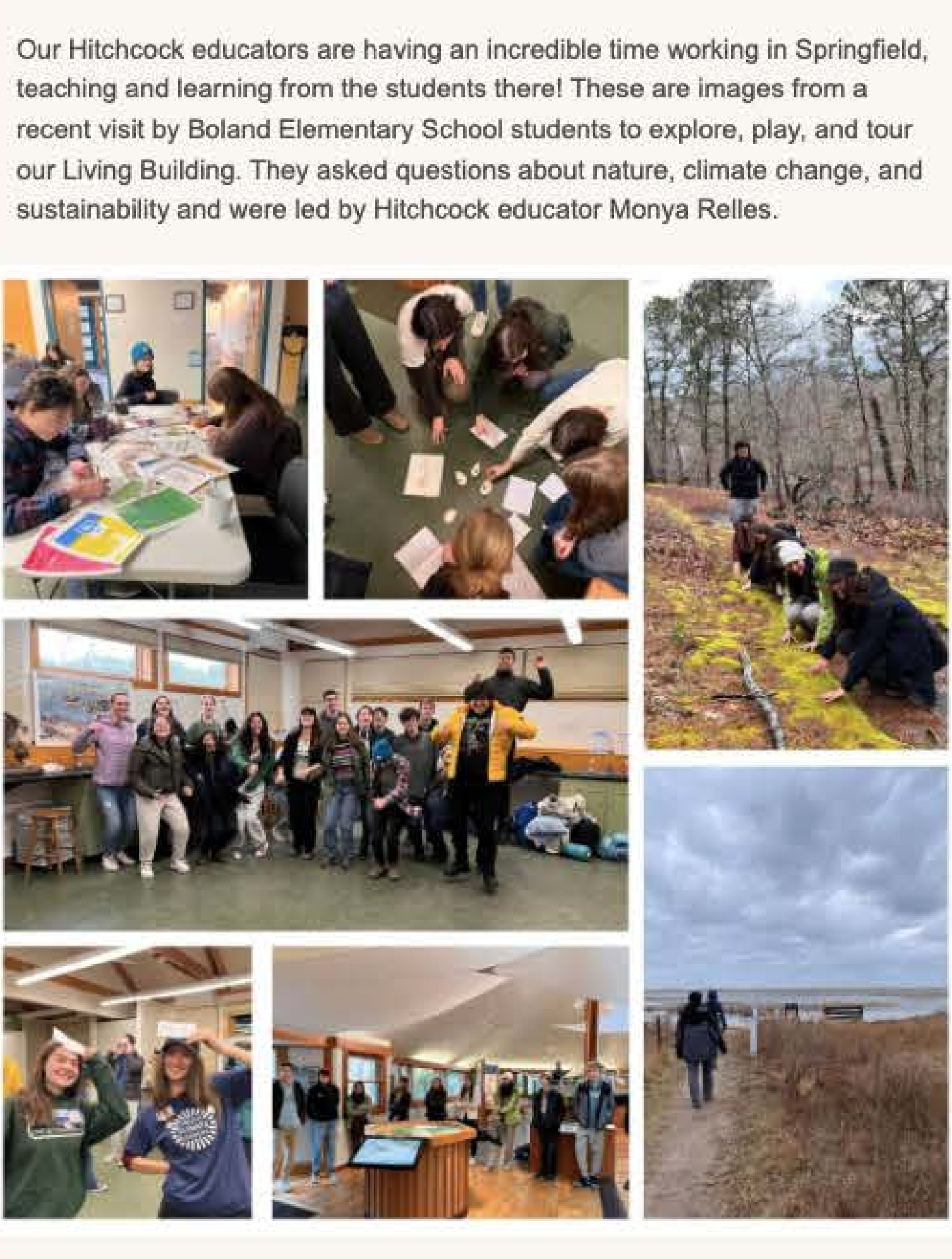


March 28: The Hitchcock Center is incredibly honored to have received an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) FY2022 Museums for America grant for our SEEDS program: Schools Exploring Engineering, Design, and Sustainability in partnership with the Springfield Public Schools for three years.

SEEDS is a new Hitchcock Center program that focuses on using an engineering design challenge approach to build STEM capacity in 3rd grade classrooms in the @springfieldk12 Springfield, MA school district.

"Schools Exploring Engineering Design and Sustainability (SEEDS) will provide our students with opportunities to learn about STEM careers and to see themselves in STEM. Through the program, kids will come to understand that climate change is urgent, but that we are not powerless against it. Our students can be hopeful about and be part of climate change solutions," said Ronald St. Amand, Director of Science for Springfield Public Schools.

Our Hitchcock educators are having an incredible time working in Springfield, teaching and learning from the students there! These are images from a recent visit by Boland Elementary School students to explore, play, and tour our Living Building. They asked questions about nature, climate change, and sustainability and were led by Hitchcock educator Monya Relles.



March 13: This weekend's Youth Leadership Retreat was a blast! It was three days of workshops, journaling and creating art, campfires, a field trip at Cape Cod, networking and connecting.

Workshops were led by Youth Climate Leaders and focused on youth advocacy, artivism and activism, eco-grief and hope, green careers and UN sustainable development, and overcoming barriers.

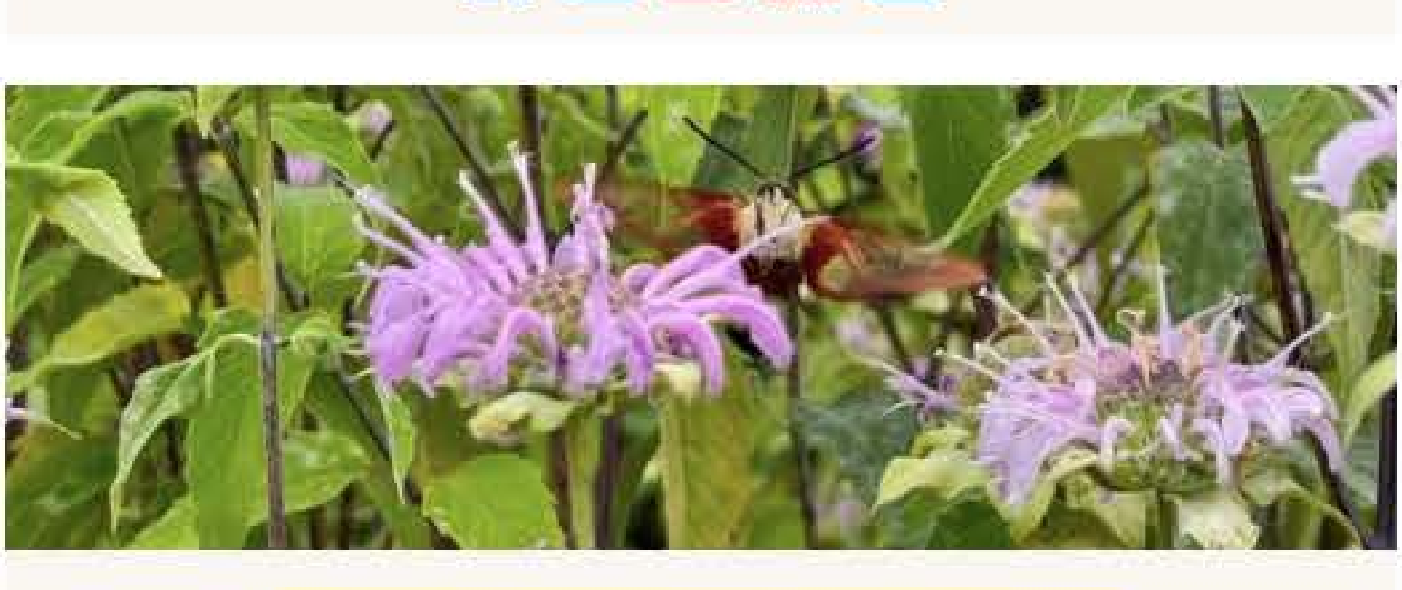
Planned by the Youth Climate Leaders of Western Massachusetts, the retreat was supported by adult mentors from @massaudubon and the Hitchcock Center. Youth representatives from the Western Mass region were Audrey Quinn and Ollie Perrault. Ollie is the 2022 recipient of the Heroes Among Us Award from the @celtics for her work as a Youth Climate Leader.This weekend's Youth Leadership Retreat was a blast! It was three days of workshops, journaling and creating art, campfires, a field trip at Cape Cod, networking and connecting.

SNAIL
SNAKE

February 15: Happy birthday to Eric Carle Loves Animals! 🎉 Our neighbors at The Eric Carle Museum stopped by on their local book tour to share the new book and meet a few of our teaching animals.

Reposted from @CarleMuseum · Where to next on our Eric Loves Animals field trip? Our neighbor, Hitchcock Center for the Environment! Founded in 1962, The Hitchcock Center connects people with nature and encourages a deeper emotional bond with the natural world that sustains us all. During our visit we met Cob (a corn snake), three-toed box turtles names Ivy and Terra, and a very 'hoppy' tree frog.

Follow us to see the Hitchcock Center on your daily social media feed!



Support Education for a Healthy Planet

MISSION The Hitchcock Center's mission is to educate and to inspire action for a healthy planet.

VISION We envision a world where people, communities and ecosystems thrive.

Hitchcock Center for the Environment
845 West Street | Amherst, MA 01002
413-256-6006 | hitchcockcenter.org

Hitchcock Center Hours
Yard and Trails: Dawn to Dusk
Visitor Center and Bathrooms:
Monday - Friday 9 AM - 4 PM

Follow us on social media for more updates from HCE!

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