HMCA Activities Update

by Diana Todd

for sharing at the September 14, 2015 meeting of the HPC

1. The Tom Wessels talk and walk on August 6 was well received. About 55 people attended the slide show, and 25 joined the walk in the woods.
2. Two guided hikes focusing on ferns were offered this summer, led by Patti Smith and co-hosted by BEEC. About a dozen people attended each.
3. Four guided hikes are planned for fall, on these topics: history, mushrooms (co-hosted by BEEC), bird banding demonstration, and early ski lift technology.
4. The trail committee has installed the bridge at the stream crossing on the Douglas Trail and installed trails signs at all major intersections on the north-side trails. The north-side trails have been cleared of blowdowns and weed-whacked. Undergrowth at Saltman’s Overlook has been cleared and a temporary bench installed. A rustic log bench has also been installed near the cliffs just below the Hogback summit.
5. Nancy Anderson plans to staff a table for HMCA at the Marlboro Fair. Bob & Diana will help with setup.
6. Bird banding stations have been installed at several locations in the former ski area by UMass researchers. They will be working most weekday mornings until Halloween.
7. The Lyndon State College research involving ticks, mice and Lyme disease continues. The only sign of this work are some small surveyor’s flags near the ski area summit.
8. Phase 2 of the 10-year Early Successional Habitat project has gotten underway. Conner Hamilton was hired to create three openings on the Great White Way, which he accomplished in August. Five volunteer work days are planned. The first is on Sept 13 (the day before the HPC meeting).
9. Marlboro College Professor Jaime Tanner will be visiting Hogback with her Ecology class this fall to look at the ESH project sites. She will be assigning the class a project to come up with ideas for how we can assess the impact of the project.
10. HMCA has received federal non-profit status, pending submission of some additional minor documentation.
11. HMCA currently has 297 people subscribing to its email newsletter.
12. 391 people currently follow the Hogback Facebook page.
13. The Hogback web page has received over 3,200 visits since May 2015. (That’s when we started tracking site visits.)