

# Make a Difference! Spring Celebrations!

*“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.” - Jane Goodall*

Yay! It's spring! A time to leave winter hibernation, watch returning migratory birds, and prepare for plantings. There are three annual celebrations welcomed this time of year: Arbor and Earth Days in April and World Migratory Bird Day in May. Earth Day is really every day!

Arbor Day occurs on different days of the year depending where you live. In Connecticut, Arbor Day is celebrated on the last Friday of April . The end of April is the best time to plant trees in southern New England. More northern areas celebrate in May while in the south, plantings often take place in January or February. Arbor Day is not just about planting trees but recognizing their value in the environment. Trees improve air quality by converting carbon dioxide to oxygen, provide habitat for wildlife, offer shade for all, and are of great aesthetic value. Good choices for native trees with wildlife value include: flowering dogwood, white oak, hickory, sugar maple, and tulip poplar.



Flowering dogwood



Tulip poplar



White oak



Outdoor cats can decimate wildlife.

World Migratory Bird Day is celebrated on the second Saturday of May to herald the return of migratory birds and the nesting season. There is also a date chosen in October to mark the migration of birds south. The event is coordinated by a nonprofit organization called the Environment for the Americas. The theme for 2025 is “Shared Spaces: Creating Bird-Friendly Cities and Communities.” As so much of the world’s population lives in cities, there are many challenges to migrating birds. Some of these challenges include buildings, development, domestic pets, non-native plantings, and pollution. People can help birds by removing invasive plants, dimming lights at night, making windows visible, minimizing the use of plastic, keeping cats indoors, and avoiding the use of pesticides.



Invasive autumn olive often takes over open fields.



Lights are a navigational hazard to migrating birds.

*To enhance and encourage the public use and awareness of Sessions Woods*



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The Friends of Sessions Woods was established as an all-volunteer organization in 1998 to facilitate projects and programs that enhance the value of Sessions Woods.



## Ask a Naturalist

### When are fawns born?

White-tailed deer fawns are usually born in late May or early June. Twins are common in Connecticut. Each fawn can weigh from four to eight pounds. The doe and fawn are often not seen together as does typically leave fawns during the day, returning to feed three or four times for about 15 minutes each visit. It is illegal to remove a fawn from the wild.



### What bird sounds like a hoarse robin?

The beautiful scarlet tanager! This forest singer is a migratory bird and returns from South America to Connecticut's woodlands in May to nest and rear young. Scarlet tanagers are insectivores, relishing the diversity of insects found in temperate climates. They also eat berries, including blueberries! Female scarlet tanagers sing but their song is softer and less raspy than male songsters.



## Sessions Woods Nature Calendar

The Sessions Woods Conservation Education Center's Public Program Series is a cooperative venture between the CT DEEP Wildlife Division and the Friends of Sessions Woods. For more information, please call 860-424-3017.

### May 10, 2025 (Saturday), 8:00-10:00 a.m. Migratory Bird Walk

Join Wildlife Photographer Paul Fusco and Naturalist Laura Rogers-Castro for a leisurely walk along the trails at Sessions Woods to listen for and view migratory birds in honor of "World Migratory Bird Day." Paul and Laura will guide participants to several habitats, including eastern woodland and beaver marsh, on this 2-mile, roundtrip excursion. Please bring binoculars, water, and wear a hat and comfortable shoes! Meet at the Gazebo in the parking lot.



Lefty to right: Indigo bunting, American redstart, black and white warbler, rose-breasted grosbeak

Call 860-424-3017 or stop in at the front office of the Conservation Education Center to register for any of the programs and be provided with a cancellation call/email if the weather is unfavorable. Please stay home if you are not feeling well.

### Why am I seeing so many black birds?

One of the many signs of spring is the return of the red-winged blackbird and flocks of common grackles. Male red-winged blackbirds usually return north in late February and can soon be heard calling in wetlands across the state.

Common grackles, lanky, long-tailed, bronzy birds with iridescent bluish heads, migrate in large flocks. These flocks often make brief appearances in backyards, pecking for food along the ground. Acorns and other remaining seeds are favored foods at this time of year.



Common grackle



European starlings

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Memberships run annually from July 1 through June 30 of the following year. Each membership receives *Connecticut Wildlife* magazine.

For new members only: Memberships received during the months of January to June are effective through June 30 of the following year.

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

We gratefully accept your contributions. Fees and contributions are fully tax deductible. My check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed. Please send your check, made payable to Friends of Sessions Woods, to:

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