



## **White Mountains Interpretive Association**

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### **Summer Newsletter, 2014**

The White Mountains Interpretive Association (WMIA) exists to encourage visitors to understand and appreciate our forest resources. The WMIA was the 2006 recipient of the National Association for Interpretation's "Excellence in Interpretive Support" Award.

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#### **Popular Lower Falls Closed for renovations**

The Lower Falls Recreation site, located along the Kancamagus Highway, will be closed this summer for extensive renovations. This project will improve public safety, enhance the recreation experience and minimize visitor impacts to area resources and the Swift River.



Construction began in early June and will continue into November. Renovations include changes to the Lower Falls parking area and the redesign will reduce sedimentation into the Swift River and provide better access from the highway. An accessible trail leading to a viewing platform of Lower Falls will be constructed and the historic Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) era picnic pavilion will be restored. Finally, a trail network will be better defined through the site to help minimize soil compaction and impacts to vegetation.

"While we understand visitors may be disappointed to learn this popular site will be closed, the long term benefits of this project will outweigh the short term inconvenience," said Brian Johnston, Assistant Ranger at the Saco Ranger District. "This is just one of many sites that visitors can enjoy on the National Forest and we encourage people to plan ahead for their visit."

This project is possible through partnerships with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation and Natural Resources Conservation Services in addition to fees collected at the site via the Recreation Enhancement Act.

Closed signs will be posted at the site while the project is underway and updated information can be found at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/whitemountain>.

#### **Do you like Gardening?**

The kitchen garden and herb garden at the Russell Colbath House attract many visitors every week. However, it needs frequent attention, thinning and weeding. If you would be interested in volunteering to work an hour or two in the garden please let us know. We have experienced gardeners who can work with you and introduce you to the variety of plants. WMIA will reimburse volunteers for travel mileage. Call us at 603-452-5148 or email at [wmiaofnh@gmail.com](mailto:wmiaofnh@gmail.com).



## Summer Campground Programs Kick off

A series of natural and cultural history programs will be provided to the public free of charge at four sites in the White Mountain National Forest. These programs can be found at the RC House Barn, Campton Campground, Russell Pond Campground and Dolly Copp Campground.

This summer's first program at Dolly Copp Campground was "Creatures of the Night", presented by the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center. Over 100 visitors filled the CCC-built Dolly Copp Visitor Center to learn about nocturnal life in the forest.

The evening's three featured animals were the Big Brown Bat, the Porcupine, and the Great Horned Owl. This engaging program was made possible by a partnership between the White Mountain National Forest, White Mountains Interpretive Association, and ProSports, Inc.

The program schedule is available at the Visitor Centers.

## Looking for a venue for family or group gathering?

The Russell-Colbath barn and Dolly Copp Picnic area are perfect for events large and small - and can be reserved online.



### Russell Colbath Barn

The Historic Site includes the Russell-Colbath House, a timber frame barn, parking, toilet facilities, picnic tables, and more.



### Dolly Copp Picnic Area

Located along the Peabody River, this site has ample opportunity for small family picnics or large group gatherings. The large picnic pavilion, constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1936 has a large stone fireplace and numerous picnic tables.

The charge is only \$50 and reservations may be made at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov).

## Conservation Education Grant Lichen Education Project 2014

*Lichen (noun) - a simple slow-growing plant that typically forms a low crustlike, leaflike, or branching growth on rocks, walls, and trees.*

The WMIA has provided a grant to the Hubbard Brook Research Foundation to aid in the development of a Lichen Education program and materials to be used by high school teachers.

From this program students will learn the biology, natural and cultural history, and scientific importance of lichens through investigation and use of a dichotomous key. Lichen biomonitoring is helping federal land managers meet federal and agency responsibilities to detect, map, evaluate trends and assess the ecological impacts of air pollutants. Students will provide data through citizen science efforts to the US Forest Service Lichen Biomonitoring program.

This project began in 2013 when Sarah Thorne, high school teacher at Prospect Mountain High School, successfully developed and utilized Lichen Lesson Plans with her high school students. In 2014, Thorne will develop a "teach the teachers" guide and answer key, develop a curricula that explains what a lichen is, its function and scientific importance. and will lead a workshop at the New Hampshire Science Teacher's Association meeting in November, 2014. Thorne will work with the White Mountain National Forest webmaster to develop a section on Lichen Education on the WMNF webpage in order to share this work with other educators. Assistance will also be provided by Dr. Natalie Cleavitt, Research Associate at Cornell University.

For more information, contact Hubbard Brook Research Foundation at [hubbardbrookfoundation.org](http://hubbardbrookfoundation.org).

