



VERMONT *Nature*

FALL/WINTER 2017-2018

Explore Nature and Marvel in Science

VINS Adventure Playscape

Though there are many trails and places to play at the VINS Nature Center, this year we are adding new space dedicated to this type of exploration.

At the new VINS Adventure Playscape, we've used natural wood and stone to create a place for kids with elements that will build confidence, agility, teamwork and use of the imagination. Visitors can become a spider on a 16-foot web, change into a woodchuck crawling through a 40-foot tunnel, be a gray fox balancing on logs or transform into a squirrel scrambling up our climbing wall. In addition, they can make music and art or build forts in the woods. This new exhibit promises to bring out the inner-explorer in your child.

The Education department is growing with more colleagues of the feathered persuasion. VINS has recently acquired five new educational ambassadors: a Black Vulture, Eastern Screech Owl, Red-shouldered Hawk, American Kestrel, and a Peregrine Falcon. VINS' birds support an important public education program that engages, inspires, and empowers



Vermont and New Hampshire residents, as well as those traveling from afar, to steward the habitats and wellbeing of all wildlife.

VINS is adding a new structure to house our education ambassadors that normally migrate in winter to warmer climates so they will also have a permanent four-season home and be comfortably housed – no matter how harsh the winter or how extreme the temperature.

—Chris Collier

StarLab Planetarium

Through the VINS School Programs, VINS Science Educators work with students and teachers to foster a strong interest in science and the environment, and to steward a sense of place and connection to the natural world.

We continue to expand our STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) materials used to engage and educate school children, by incorporating new tools that will create an enriching experience in the science classroom.

The newest tool is a StarLab planetarium, thanks to the generosity of the Butler Foundation. This portable planetarium immerses students in the stars while learning about the Milky Way, H. A. Rey Constellations, Greek myths, Native American legends and bird migration. This provides a unique opportunity for students to view the expanse of the night sky free of any light pollution. Research has found that a visit to a planetarium can spark a student's interest in science, and with



the StarLab's portability, we can now bring high-quality, stimulating, astronomical education to students and teachers throughout the region.

The StarLab has already traveled to schools as well as been open to the public at the VINS Nature Center. It was part of VINS' celebration of the solar eclipse in August, when over 620 visitors came to the Nature Center to take part in one of nature's most amazing phenomena. Visitors were able to view the eclipse through special glasses provided by VINS, while inside the dark of the StarLab, visitors gazed at the incredible view of our sky at night. VINS is already looking forward to 2024 when parts of Vermont will be in the path of totality for the next solar eclipse. In the meantime, stay tuned for upcoming StarLab presentations at VINS, or contact us to book the StarLab for your school or community event.

—Hannah Gelroth



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A Special Message

From Our Executive Director

VINS has been part of the fabric of our community since 1972. As we celebrate our 45th Anniversary this year, we are grateful for the generous support from each member, visitor, and volunteer.

Thank you for being a part of VINS' success! With your help, VINS has been able to expand and create exciting, new features for all.

- This was a successful year for the Nature Camp Program providing more than 425 children with enriching experiences in the outdoors through both day and overnight camps.
- There has been a consistent increase of visitors to the Nature Center in the past three years. Last year, there was a record number of nearly 37,000 people, an eleven percent increase, over the previous year.
- In August this year, VINS hosted over 600 visitors who ventured out to grab sun-safe glasses to witness the Solar Eclipse.
- VINS' Pavilion re-opened on Earth Day of 2017 as an all-season venue with a new sound and projector system. This is available

not only for live bird programs, but also for events and exhibits of all kinds.

- The new Adventure Playscape is nearing completion – an interactive place for children to climb and explore.
- VINS has welcomed five new education program birds for a total of fifteen program birds. To accommodate the additional birds, VINS is constructing a new building to hold up to eleven birds. This building will be a larger, more comfortable space, while providing a climate-controlled interior for the birds that would normally migrate to warmer climates in the winter.

Like the forty-five years prior, VINS continues to instill in visitors an appreciation for scientific discovery and environmental stewardship. This vital work would not be possible without you. We look forward to your visit, so we can share the many new and wonderful features the VINS Nature Center has to offer. Again, thank you for carrying VINS through this milestone.

—Charles F. Rattigan

From Our Former Chair

I would like to thank the Board of Trustees, but especially the Executive Committee, the sub-set of Board members who make decisions on the oversight of the organization.

I was incredibly fortunate to have a strong Executive Committee. It is important to recognize them as they step down from their roles this fall.

- As Vice-chair, Anne Silberfarb gave me sensible advice with much to consider. Her support has been invaluable. VINS is fortunate to have had such loyalty and commitment.
- Tom Ciardelli, Treasurer of ten years, has been very generous in his support for VINS. His calm and measured direction of the committee has guided VINS's finances through thick and thin.

- Debbie Williamson has been Secretary for nine years. You can rely on Debbie to come up with a new slant on any idea and, together with her passionate commitment to education, has strongly directed the Board's thinking. I'll certainly miss her clear insight, her support and many offerings of cookies throughout this time.

While Debbie, Tom and I will remain on the Board for another year or two, we thank Anne and wish her the best as she begins this next chapter.

—Simon Carr



Thank You and Welcome!

Simon Carr Reminisces on His Time as Chair

As I write about my time at VINS as the Chair of the Board of Trustees I think about the great team here, comprising many wonderful staff, volunteers and Trustees and the phenomenal work they all do collectively.

It's amazing to have witnessed the many changes that have occurred at the VINS Nature Center. As I began my role as Chair four years ago, VINS was in search of a new Executive Director and being led by Judy Callens as Interim Director. Once Charles Rattigan filled the role of Executive Director, VINS was guided into a worthy direction.

Achievements accomplished these past four years are many new exhibits, record attendances to the Nature Camps and

the Nature Center, an increase in VINS' Outreach and School Programs, an expansion of space in the Center for Wild Bird Rehabilitation, winterization of the Pavilion into an all-season space, additional artwork throughout the campus, an annual en Plein Air Painting Festival, new overnight camps at the Old Pepper Place Nature Reserve and, coming soon, a new Adventure Playscape – among other successes.

These achievements are accomplished due to the enthusiasm, passion and hard work that all staff, volunteers and supporting contributors bring to VINS. I am very proud and grateful to have been Chair during this time and I look forward to VINS' prosperous future.



I am delighted to be handing over the Chair role to Jack Lee. I am especially confident that he and his new supportive Executive Committee – with Tig Tillinghast as Treasurer and Jon Bouton as Secretary – will push VINS to new heights.

—Simon Carr

Meet Jack Lee, VINS' New Chairman



Change is in the air - with the seasons and at the Nature Center. VINS is celebrating its 45th anniversary, testimony to the vision and mission that so many of you have supported over the years.

We thank Simon Carr for his four years of leadership as Chair of the Board of Trustees. He has directed

the strengthening of VINS' financial position, leadership, and trustee board development. Mr. Carr will remain on the Board as a Trustee to complete his third term.

I am excited about my role as Chair of the Board. Throughout the organization I see an engaged and very talented board, strong leadership in VINS management, very dedicated staff and a passionate base of volunteers all aligned in the mission of VINS. I come into this position with more than ten years of experience on multiple boards throughout the Upper Valley and am excited to contribute but also to learn. Together, with the entire board, we are thrilled to take on the challenge of continuing the positive momentum achieved to date.

I invite the members, advisors, board, staff, volunteers, businesses and general community to send us ideas and suggestions for how VINS can be even more successful in our next one, five and forty-five years, as environmental science and education is more important now than ever.

I thank you for the opportunity to serve in this role, and for your continued support of the VINS mission. I look forward to many years serving as your Chair.

—Jack Lee



Visit Us at the Nature Center – New Exhibits, Science Exploration, and More!

VINS Volunteer: Ian Miyashiro



I started at VINS as a Wildlife Services Intern in 2009, continuing as an Environmental Educator until 2011. The birds and people drew me back as a docent in 2012.

I have always worn many hats at VINS. Since 2010, I've graphed the rehabilitation admission numbers to keep track of statistics and material for reports, board

meetings, and public programs. I love talking over the challenging questions from the public with the educators. I treasure the connections I've made at VINS and working with the staff when hundreds more visitors than expected arrive for an event, such as the Owl Festival and the Solar Eclipse. I also relish when the birds present a new puzzle or

challenge – shifting around the Snowy Owls – or when they decide to change their behavior, for instance the exhibit Bald Eagle laying eggs.

Though I started working with birds over twenty years ago, I always love seeing them through the eyes of the public. As staff, my favorite thing was to steal a minute (or ten) to chat with visitors walking through the exhibits. Doing a thirty or fifty-minute tour of the raptor enclosures I get to hunt for the coolest thing about each of the resident birds to share. The visitors' questions, personal encounters with the birds' wild counterparts, and thrill of up-close experiences continue to renew and fuel my passion for working with, researching, and talking about our feathered neighbors.

—Ian Miyashiro



Volunteers Are Vital to VINS' mission – Visit Us at vinsweb.org/volunteer

Remembrance: Jenepher Lingelbach (1935-2017)

Ms. Jenepher Rice Lingelbach was an enriching presence for anyone who knew her. She lived her life fully and passionately.

Jenepher graduated from Milton Academy in 1953 and from Vassar College in 1957. In 1972, she and her family moved to East Barnard, VT from Milton, MA. Jenepher then began a lifelong involvement with VINS serving as a volunteer, teacher, co-founder of the Environmental Learning for the Future (ELF) program, Interim Director and as Chair to the Board of Trustees. She was the primary author of *Hands on Nature*, the book used to teach ELF. Continuing her passion for education, she later served as a Trustee

at the Sharon Academy. Jenepher spent much of her time outdoors and writing beautiful poetry. She and artist Sabra Field collaborated on a book, *Before Life Hurries On*, and Jenepher published another book *Words Like Leaves*. A special poem, "We Hope" is engraved on a bench by the beautiful Ottauquechee River at the VINS Nature Center.

We will always be grateful to Jenepher and her vision of a healthy environment, faith in the natural curiosity of children, and endless cheerfulness and enthusiasm which helped to shape and nurture VINS into what it is today.

—Mary Davidson Graham



A Winter Surprise



Every winter, people flock to the snowy landscape of Vermont to enjoy outdoor recreation. Occasionally, you can combine these activities with the year-round offerings of wildlife viewing in Vermont's natural setting. So, next time you are out snowshoeing or cross-country skiing, bring the binoculars – you might be surprised at what you find.

In February of this year, surprise was exactly what two individuals experienced when snowmobiling in Brownsville, Vermont. Any encounter with a bald eagle is special, and getting close to this raptor is truly breathtaking. This eagle, however, was the last thing these two expected, or wanted, to see.

Lying on the ground, the bird was face down in several inches of water, surrounded by regurgitated meat and was barely moving. When the snowmobilers realized the eagle was still alive, they knew they needed to act fast to save her. With quick response from the game warden on duty, Sgt. Keith Gallant, the eagle was brought to VINS – where she received the care she needed.

Arriving cold, dehydrated, weak and disoriented, the bird continued to regurgitate throughout her first day in care. The good news was, her body didn't show signs of starvation and her feathers were in good condition, so she had not been grounded for too long. All signs pointed to toxicity.

Apex predators, like bald eagles, are particularly vulnerable to acquiring high levels of toxins in their bodies. This is because contaminants accumulate in the tissues of smaller animals and work their way up the food chain. Any number of toxins or pathogens, from lead to botulism, even rotten meat, could have caused the symptoms that we saw.

We started treatment right away: heat support, rest and lots of fluids. Fluids were administered intravenously and subcutaneously at the maximum dosages for the first few days to flush out the bird's system. We then started nutritional support in the form of a liquid diet formula until she was able to eat on her own. Little by little, she grew stronger and started to behave how a bald eagle should.

For the last few weeks in our care, the eagle lived in an outdoor flight cage and was exercised by the rehabilitation staff multiple times a day. She was healthy again, but still needed time to build up her flight muscles before she would be ready for life in the wild.

Finally, in mid-May, after two and a half months in captivity, a group of staff, volunteers and friends of VINS gathered to see the eagle off. Watching the bird soar away, healthy and strong, was a moving and rewarding experience for all of us.

A chance encounter turned these two individual's typical winter outing into an unforgettable story, all while making the difference between life and death for a bald eagle.

—Lauren Adams



Remembrance

Robert S. Ogden, Jr.
(1934-2017)



Mr. Robert S. Ogden Jr. of Madison, Connecticut, a supporter of VINS for almost two decades, passed at the age of 83.

Bob was raised in New Canaan, CT, graduated from Harvard University in 1956, and married Joan Mickle in 1958. After attending Columbia University Law School in 1959, Bob practiced law in New York City before moving to London in 1968 to open an office there for his law firm. In 1980, Bob joined The Walt Disney Company as Vice President, Counsel of the Consumer Products Division. Several years before retiring, he worked for Gursky and Ederer, PC, focusing on intellectual property law.

With interests in science education, wild bird rehabilitation, art and nature, Bob and his wife, Joan, were active supporters of VINS environmental education programs. They both served on the VINS Board of Advisors. The Second Annual en Plein Air Painting Festival in 2016 was dedicated to Joan's memory, as she was an accomplished artist. Bob was a generous supporter of VINS and contributed substantially to the winterization of the Pavilion. His valued, long-term friendship will be greatly missed.

—Mary Davidson Graham



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Upcoming Events *Visit us at the VINS Nature Center*

November 25
Turkeys & Turkey Vultures

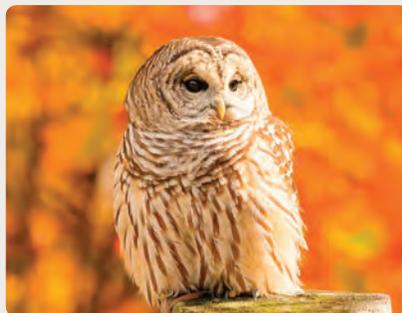
December 15
Nature Camp Registration Opens

December 16
Snowy Owl Day

January 13
Winter Wildlife Celebration

February 17, 18 & 19
Great Backyard Bird Count

February 24 & 25
Owl Festival



Photos by Jayne Buckley Sykes

View our full event schedule at vinsweb.org/calendar

VINS NATURE CAMP Pre-K to 8th Grade



Locations in Quechee,
South Pomfret, Washington, VT
and Hanover, NH

**MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNTS
AVAILABLE!**

Contact us at 802.359.5000
or camps@vinsweb.org
vinsweb.org/nature-camp