

FINAL MINUTES

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Advisory Committee (NHESAC)

7/14/2022

DFW Field Headquarters, Southwest Meeting Room #103

1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581

Meeting held virtually via Zoom

MEMBERS:

Present: Mark Mello, Kevin Powers, David Small, Tim Flanagan, Bill Brumback, Wayne Peterson

Absent: Joseph Larson

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:

Present: Russ Hopping, Andy Finton

Absent: None

AGENCY STAFF:

Present: Eve Schlüter, Mike Nelson

OTHERS:

Present: Christopher Borgatti, Peter Serverance, Michael Veit

– The meeting was called to order at 1:36 P.M. –

1. Approval of Minutes from the 4/14/2022 Meeting

Mark Mello clarified that his comments in the minutes should read as one new micromoth to science and not two new micromoths to science. After this clarification Dave Small motioned that the April minutes be accepted, Kevin Powers seconded, and members voted unanimously to approve.

2. Chair's Comments – Mark Mello

No comments

3. Board Member's Comments – Joseph Larson

No comments since Joe was absent.

4. NHESP Report & Assistant Director's Report – Eve Schlüter

Eve shared the news that Jennifer Longsdorf is now on parental leave (congratulations to Jennifer) through October and all committee correspondence should be directed to Eve until Jennifer returns. The Program is actively interviewing for several of the open staff positions, primarily in regulatory review.

NHESP was awarded two SHMCAP (State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan) grants from EEOA. One grant is for \$225,000 to support BioMap development and rollout for Fall 2022 and the other grant is for \$270,000 for expanding Great Marsh Restoration design and planning.

NHESP is on track to finish building out the MESA online filing application as part of the Heritage Hub. The service should be online in the fall of 2022

The Phase 1 report to the Glyphosate Commission is now available and included public input.

5. *A Checklist of the Bees of Massachusetts - Summary and Highlights* – Michael Veit, Independent Researcher

Michael presented on the recently published checklist for Massachusetts. The goal of the publication is to help agencies and conservation organizations to better understand the status of bee species and their conservation needs.

The publication used more than 100,000 records, mostly museum and personal collections since there is little published on bees specifically for Massachusetts.

392 species were recognized, and two additional species were added to the list after publication.

Most the records are from 2005 or later, since 2005 marked the start of greater interest in bees in the state broadly.

Michael spent time discussing four species in particular based on the rarity that may be worth considering for future state listing. These species include:

- *Epeoloides pilosulus* – a yellow loosestrife oil-collecting specialist that also prefers nectaring on dogbane (*Apocynum*). This species benefits from management that promotes its host plants. The species may need sites with 1,000 or more host plants.
- *Andrena parnassiae* – limited to western MA where its host plant (Grass of Parnassus *Parnassia glauca*) is found.
- *Andrena rehni* – this species specializes on chestnuts. Currently being found in chestnut orchards and sites where American chestnut has resprouted in abundance.
- *Pseudopanurgus pauper* – specialist on New Jersey tea.

6. *Member's and Associate Member's Comments*

Wayne Petersen – No comment

Bill Brumback – No comment

Tim Flanagan – Tim has been spending time mapping rocks

Dave Small – Dave commented that it was a good spring for *Williamsonia fletcheri*. He confirmed the species at four sites and noticed more people are getting interested in Odonate watching and documenting. Dave asked if the Massachusetts Guide to Dragonflies and Damselflies will be republished. NHESP is looking into what is needed to reprint this guide that is now out of print.

Kevin Powers – Noted that the Plymouth Long Beach habitat has changed over the last year due to erosion from winter storms, and least terns and piping plovers have moved further north on the peninsula. A stone wall barrier is to be extended north on the east of the beach, and now does not appear to conflict with nesting for these species.

Andy Finton – Andy noted he has been spending most of his time on BioMap.

Mark Mello – Mark noted an inchworm, *Adrepanulatrix liberaria*, that is dependent on New Jersey tea as a host is still found in the Albany Pine Bush, NY. It is listed under MESA as Endangered.

Russ Hopping – Russ reported that the USFWS was closing OSV access for surf fishing on the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, and The Trustees was circulating a draft beach management plan for the 12 miles of beach on Martha's Vineyard that they manage. The beaches are getting narrower with climate change forcing changes to OSV access to improve beach resiliency.

Russ also asked about updates to the Avian Influenza outbreak. Several members shared what they knew or heard and NHESP is tracking the threat. Canada has seen die offs and is quite worried, and the Boston Globe recently had an article about birds dying along the coast in Rhode Island. Red tide or starvation may also be compounding the issue, especially with seabirds.

Guest Comments:

Peter Severance – Peter mentioned that no one seemed to be looking at concerns with the tidal portion of the Merrimack River, including the fresh water tidal areas, in the greater context of salt marsh restoration in the Great Marsh

– The meeting adjourned at 3:14 P.M. –

Drafted by: Russ Hopping
Submitted by: Kevin Powers