

Speaking for Wildlife Field Trip Leader Checklist

www.speakingforwildlife.org



Scheduling Your Event

Volunteers should work in their communities to identify opportunities to lead guided walks. See “Field Walk 101: You CAN Lead a Guided Walk” for ideas on how to plan a field walk.

- Determine event location and several possible dates with your target group
- If you want to use materials in the Speaking for Wildlife kit located in each County office (or Durham, for Strafford Co.), check website Presentation Calendar (<http://extension.unh.edu/FWT/SFWVolunteers.htm>) to make sure there aren't overlapping events going on. Calendars are color-coded by county (see the down arrow in upper right hand corner).
- Call or email Haley Andreozzi to book the date. She will post your event on the online calendar.

Haley: 603-862-5327 or send email to: haley.andreozzi@unh.edu

- If you would like help planning your walk, you can schedule a pre-walk site visit with the County Forester at your field site (optional). <http://extension.unh.edu/FWT/contactus.htm>

Before Your Event

- Think carefully about your audience. How much do they know already? You may need to tailor the tone of your talk to your group. The most important goal of your talk is to *raise awareness*. All the information in the world won't matter to people who don't yet know about or care about your issue or topic.
- Do you want to work with another volunteer? If so, contact your partner early on.
- If you want help creating a **flyer** for your event, the Speaking for Wildlife website has a sample flyer that you can adapt for your event. Use MS Word to adapt the flyer on your computer. You may also want to issue a press release about the event.
 - Flyer sample (http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource001617_Rep2174.doc)
 - Writing a Press Release (<http://extension.unh.edu/Forestry/Docs/WritingANewsRel.pdf>)
- If this is a program that is open to the public (not for an already existing group), you'll have to work to get the word out:
 - o Email (or mail) the press release to your local papers and radio stations
 - o Post flyers at locations around the town
 - o Email the press release and/or the flyer to friends, local officials, your town office and your library and ask people to spread the word (email is a *great* tool for this). Keep in mind that many email users are suspicious of attachments. Include the text of the

press release in the body of the email so people don't have to open the attachment. Use .pdf format instead of a Word document whenever possible (your County Forester can help with this).

- Social Media can be a great tool – post your event on Facebook and ask folks to spread the word.

- ☐ Keep in mind that all UNH Cooperative Extension programs are available to all people, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, veteran's status, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability. Regarding disabilities, think about access to your program (is it handicap accessible?). If you know about a participant's limitations ahead of time, contact Emma Carcagno or Malin Clyde for help adjusting your field walk to accommodate all participants.

- ☐ If you choose to use the SFW kit, pick it up a few days before your event from County Extension office in your County (or in Durham for Strafford Co.). Kit includes:
 - ☐ Speaking for Wildlife Vest
 - ☐ Box of Forestry & Wildlife pencils (sharpened)
 - ☐ Laminated arrow signs & masking tape
 - ☐ Copies of accident reporting forms
 - ☐ Habitat map of each county & Wildlife Action Plan posters, laminated
 - ☐ Copy of "New England Wildlife" book & other guides as desired
 - ☐ A selection of handouts, see below for examples. You don't need to hand these to everyone, but have a few on hand in case someone wants more information.
[Habitat Stewardship Brochures](#) for the habitat types you will visit
[Order Form for Habitat Stewardship Brochures](#)
[More Harm Than Good: Why Not to Feed Deer](#)
[NH's Trees, Shrubs & Vines with Wildlife Value](#)
[Nuisance Wildlife in and around the Home](#)

Special Items for Field Walks

- ☐ Meet with the County Forester at your field site to plan walk (optional)
- ☐ To plan your walk, read and follow the "Design Your Own Field Walk Guide" posted on Speaking for Wildlife website. To get ideas for your walk's theme, refer to the [Habitat Stewardship Brochures](#), especially the "Stewardship Guidelines" sections. The material contained in the brochures is the kind of information we are trying to convey:
 - Raise awareness about habitats
 - Help people identify and appreciate special habitats and features for wildlife
 - Identify threats facing wildlife (without dwelling too much on the negative)
 - Convey what they can do to help

Day of Your Event

- Get there at least 3/4 hour early – if folks come far, they will show up early too!
- Post road signs (laminated ones are in the kit) if necessary
- Wear a nametag (and the UNHCE fleece vest, optional)
- For walks, review checklist in “Design Your Own Field Walk Guide” from the website
- Bring first aid kit
- Bring cell phone (if you have reception)
- Bring a copy of the Accident/Injury/Incident forms (in a folder in the kit)
- For field walks, always wait for the *entire* group to gather before you start talking
- Have a plan about what to cover, but allow for questions that open up new topics.
- Regularly ask your audience, “Are there any questions?”
- Don’t be afraid to say “I don’t know.” No expert knows everything! Use your knowledge of professionals to refer people (NH Fish & Game Region offices, County Foresters, etc.)
- Remember those key messages to deliver at some point at your event. Examples:
 - This program is part of the “Speaking for Wildlife” program. The pilot program is coordinated by UNH Cooperative Extension and the NH Coverts Project, and has been funded by the NH Charitable Foundation and the Davis Environmental Foundation.
 - You are a Coverts Volunteer or a Forest Society Volunteer, or Conservation Commissioner. Then tell people a little about that affiliation:
 - The Coverts Project is a UNH Cooperative Extension Program that trains volunteers and landowners to work on behalf of New Hampshire’s wildlife.
 - The Forest Society is dedicated to protecting the state's most important landscapes while promoting the wise use of its renewable natural resources.
 - The Conservation Commission is charged with protecting the natural resources of our town
- (Optional) At the end of your event, hand out evaluation forms and pencils – they are easy and short, and will give people a chance to learn more through the “Taking Action for Wildlife” newsletter.

After Your Event

- Return the Speaking for Wildlife kit to the UNHCE County office. Other volunteers will need them.
- Within one week, complete the Self Evaluation on the Speaking for Wildlife website:**

https://unh.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0icLeSLAkxtlewl

This is critical! It’s how we will evaluate the success of the program and adapt the materials based on your feedback.

Special Safety Reminders

- All SFW must sign a volunteer agreement form for your new role as a SFW presenter. This is to protect you. When you are acting in an official volunteer capacity, you are covered by UNH's liability insurance.
- For any accidents or injuries to volunteers, participants, or audience members, there are two forms to fill out. Both are located in the folder in the kit. Notify your County Forester or other UNHCE staff as soon as possible and to get help with the forms.
- Volunteers and program participants are not covered by Workmen's Compensation.
- All SFW volunteers must carry their own car insurance.
- When working with a school, you are there as a guest speaker, not a teacher. A teacher must be present with you at all times (this is to protect you). Avoid situations where you or any other volunteer will be alone with a child out of view of other adults.
- Never leave children unattended.
- Always carry the first aid kit on your field walk (don't leave it in the car!)
- During hunting season, you should wear hunter orange in the field as an example for others.
- Make sure you have permission from the landowner to lead a walk (public or private land). Get that permission in writing (an email is fine).
- For field walks, stay on maintained trails. It is usually unnecessary to go off trail. Your audience will have varying abilities. Keep it short – they are there for education, not a lot of exercise.