Dear Tree Spotters,

This year is a leap year and tomorrow is Leap Day - the day that allows Earth to catch up to the position it was 4 years ago. We use leap years to keep our calendars in sync with the seasons - a very important concept for those of us interested in phenology!

It takes Earth approximately 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 45 seconds to circle once around the Sun. This is called a tropical year, and it starts on the March equinox.

However, our Gregorian calendar has only 365 days in a year. If we didn't add a leap day on February 29 almost every four years, each calendar year would begin about 6 hours before the Earth completes its revolution around the Sun. As a result, our time reckoning would slowly drift apart from the tropical year and get increasingly out of sync with the seasons, which would shift by about 24 calendar days within just 100 years. That's a big shift!

Leap days fix that error by giving Earth the additional time it needs to complete a full circle around the Sun. It gets more complicated (did you notice that "almost every four years" in the above paragraph?), so if you want to learn how to determine which years are leap years, you can click here to find out :-)

I hope you enjoy your extra day this year. I also hope you enjoy this edition of Spot On!

Suzanne Mrozak,
Tree Spotters Volunteer Coordinator
TreeSpotters@fas.harvard.edu

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Topics in this issue

- 2020 training dates
- March Spotting Together
- Tree Spotters Book Club update
- Featured link: Emergence Magazine: Issue #7 - Trees
- Twitter reminder and a selection of Tweets
- Tree Spotters Spotlight

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Tree Spotter Updates

2020 training dates

Our spring schedule is now firmed up. We are offering one refresher training class and two classes for new volunteers. See below for details.

**Refresher training for continuing Tree Spotters**
Sunday, March 15, 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM followed by a walk on the grounds, weather permitting Hunnewell Building Lecture Hall
Free, but reservations required. Email TreeSpotters@fas.harvard.edu to register. (There is no online registration.)

Refresher training is offered in the spring to previously-trained Tree Spotters to provide a review of basic
concepts and program updates. We will also be happy to answer questions you may have. If you have any particular topics you'd like us to cover, please let us know!

I hope to see many of you at our refresher class. Not only will you get a chance to ask us questions, but if you don't already have them, you'll also be able to pick up one of our lovely limited edition Tree Spotters mugs and a Tree Spotters notebook :-)

Training for new volunteers
Saturday, March 28, 10:30 AM - 3:30 PM
Sunday, May 3, 10:30 AM - 3:30 PM
Both classes (which are the same) will be in the Hunnewell Building Lecture Hall
Free, but reservations required. Click [here](#) to register.

If you know of anyone who might be interested in joining us this season, please let them know!

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**March Spotting Together**

The days are getting longer and buds will be breaking soon, so it's time to kick off our on-the-grounds sessions! I hope you can join us for a Spotting Together walk on Sunday, March 22 from Noon - 1 PM. We will meet at Tree #1 on the Maple Route (**Acer saccharum** 187-2006*B) and visit the four **Acer saccharum** (Sugar Maple) and five **Acer rubrum** (Red Maple) trees on the route.

![Acer rubrum](#) The above photo of **Acer rubrum** 15350*A was taken on March 27, 2018. It will be interesting to see what effect, if any, this mild, dry winter will have on this year's flowering times.

Check the Tree Spotters Event Calendar for more information. If the weather is iffy, text or call me at 857-321-2825.

NOTE: This season we will be alternating our monthly Spotting Together and Focus Tree Gatherings. The April Focus Tree Gathering will be on April 26 from 2:00 - 2:45 PM. Details will be posted, along with the full on-the-grounds schedule, in the March Spot On! as well as in our [Event Calendar](#).

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**Tree Spotters Book Club update**

We have two more Book Club meetings scheduled in 2020:

- **March 10**: *The Forest Unseen: A Year's Watch in Nature*, by David George Haskell, Weld Hill Lecture Hall, 1300 Centre Street.
- **April 1**: *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, by Janisse Ray, Weld Hill Lecture Hall, 1300 Centre Street.

NOTE: There was a mix up on February 13th and we couldn't get into the Hunnewell Building, so we had a little huddle outside (as we shared some brownies and trail mix to fortify ourselves) and decided that since we had April 1 as a backup date, we would schedule "The Forest Unseen" for March 10 and "Ecology of a Cracker Childhood" for April 1.

**Details**

Both meetings will be back at Weld Hill. The doors will open at 6:45pm. The Book Club itself will be from 7:00 - 8:30, with 7:00 - 7:15 set aside for social time.

Once again, Betsey Henkels and Nicole Uhre-Balk will share the role of moderator. (Thanks Betsey and Nicole!)

Tea will be provided. You are welcome to bring snacks to share.

For more information on the Book Club, visit our [Book Club webpage](#).

If you are not already a Book Club member but would like to join us this season, just email us at TreeSpotters@fas.harvard.edu. We are always happy to welcome new members.
There are so many good articles in the current issue of Emergence Magazine that I’m only posting one link this month. Enjoy!

Emergence Magazine Issue #7 - Trees

Twitter reminder and a selection of Tweets

You can follow us on Twitter: https://twitter.com/ArbTreeSpotters. We post things of interest to Tree Spotters – facts about trees, links to articles on climate change and citizen science, etc. Please check us out! Here are a couple of recent Tweets in case you missed them.

- How Warming Winters Are Affecting Everything
- The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where to Go from Here! (New book by Hope Jahren, author of Lab Girl.)
- The benefits of doing Citizen Science

Tree Spotters Spotlight

The Tree Spotters Spotlight is an opportunity to let all of the Tree Spotters know what you are engaged in when you are not Tree Spotting. I know that many of you are involved in things of interest to the Tree Spotter Community, so please let me know if you have something happening in April or May that I can post in the March Spot On!

Spotlight: This month the spotlight stays shining on Steffanie Schwam and the Surface Design Association members’ exhibition at the Mosesian Center in Watertown that runs through March 20. And Michael Leidig’s music appreciation concert/talk at the Dedham Public Library on February 5 went so well that they invited him back for four more free concerts, the first of which is on April 8. (Congratulations, Michael!)

Steffanie Schwam update

Many of you will remember Steffanie’s wonderful “Fabric, Fiber & Phenology” exhibit in the Hunnewell Building’s Visitors Center last fall. If you would like to see more of her work, you are in luck!

She is currently part of the group exhibition "Threaded: Contemporary Fiber in New England" at the Mosesian Center for the Arts, 321 Arsenal Street, Watertown, MA (at the Arsenal on the Charles Campus). The show, which runs through March 20, combines artwork from Surface Design Association members that reside in all 6 New England states (Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island) in a narrative that presents a unique perspective on the artistic voices of our region.

Steffanie is also featured as a guest artist in Jane Dunneold’s 2019 book "Best of Both Worlds: Enhanced Botanical Printing". The book has some beautiful photos of Steffanie’s work, as well as tips to help you...
explore botanical printing on your own.

Michael Leidig at the Dedham Public Library


May 6: **The Love of Moms & Music.** A special musical tribute to moms through music including classical composers Mozart, Chopin and MacDowell as well as original jazz transcriptions of modern artists such as Norah Jones, Coldplay, Sting, Philip Aaberg & Vince Guaraldi.

June 10: **Remembering Fathers Through Music.** A special musical tribute to dads through music including classical composers Mozart, Beethoven, G.D. Wilson, MacDowell and Gershwin as well as original jazz transcriptions of 20th century artists such as Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Samuel Francis Smith, Mike & the Mechanics, and Coldplay.

July 1: **Americans vs. The Brits: Battle of the Musicians.** A fun "battle of the bands" highlighting composers from both sides of the Atlantic. Americans are 3 from Boston—GD Wilson, MacDowell, Amy Beach—and Gershwin. Brits are Handel (German but most of life in London), Gustav Holt, and Elgar. And of course, classic patriotic tunes such America the Beautiful, My Country Tis of Thee, and God Bless America.

Dedham Public Library

Wrap Up

The deadline for the next edition of Spot On! is March 24. If you have any information that you would like to share with your fellow Tree Spotters, please let me know by then.

As always, if you have any comments or suggestions regarding this issue of Spot On!, suggestions for future issues, or feedback on the Tree Spotters program in general, please email us at TreeSpotters@fas.harvard.edu.

To contribute to the Tree Spotters Fund, go here and click on "Tree Spotters" from the "Select a Fund" drop down menu.

Visit the Tree Spotters Website

[The Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University]