

**Updated FAR Biodiversity Study from Jake Stout, naturalist at Alewife  
Reservation  
Birds, Mammals, Reptiles, Amphibians. Insects and Fish  
June 2017**

**Biodiversity Inventory 2017 by Jake Stout, Cambridge, Ma.**

- **Mammals:**
  - **Beaver:** Though the beaver is not currently in Alewife, we can still see its effect from two years ago where it took down many saplings in the stormwater wetlands near the oxbow and about half way between Perch Pond and the ox bow along Little River the beaver took down some larger aspen trees. The trees that the beaver was storing near the oxbow have now become basking spots for turtles and green frogs. Tadpoles also swim in between the twigs and branches for shade and safety. This was also the first spot that I noticed pickerel weed growing in Little River.
  - **Coyotes:** This was the first year that I have seen a coyote in the flesh. It was February and I was walking at Little Pond and saw it running along the shore about 400 feet from where I was. Other than that encounter I have found evidence of coyotes along the north trail in every section, mostly scat. Their most common prey from looking at the scat are geese, and eastern cottontails. I have also found scat at Blair Pond and along the south side of Perch Pond. Very rarely will I find scat or tracks in the stormwater wetlands, yet two years ago I found many kills including geese, carp, and a squirrel, all located in the same place about 30 feet west of the exit to Little River. I have also found tracks along Acorn Park Drive very close to the construction where the silver maple forest was, I took a cast of these tracks. It is my opinion that the vast majority of the coyote population is located in the north trail, and they migrate around Little Pond over to Blair Pond and the south side of the river.
  - **Deer:** White tailed deer are the most common mammal in the reservation now and travel to every single part of the reservation. They prefer the north trail and the south side of the river but will also travel to the stormwater wetlands and to Blair Pond. The deer are healthy and I find their tracks and scat throughout the north trail and frequently see them. They are not afraid of me and I am able to walk along with them without scaring them. There are some bucks, though I have never seen one with antlers. I have seen new scratches on alder trees about a ¼ mile into the north trail and on trees about ¾ of a mile into the north trail. There are now a total of 12 deer in the reservation, about 6 years ago I only remember 3. The number has grown so much that I worry about over foraging and the vast increase of the tick population.

- **Eastern Cottontails:** Eastern cottontails are another very common land mammal and are mainly found in the stormwater wetlands, at the meadow before the north trail, and at Blair Pond, yet they frequently travel throughout the reservation. They forage most in the meadows in the storm water wetlands and on the north side of the river and they are very common in the meadow at Blair Pond around the goldenrod monoculture.
- **Mink:** Though I have not seen any mink I was sent a photo for identifying and it was a mink in the stormwater wetlands. It was seen foraging around the edge of the reeds along the wetland. Mink are not very common in Alewife and I rarely see evidence of them.
- **Muskrats:** Muskrats are the most common aquatic mammal and are very common in the stormwater wetlands, Blair Pond, and Yates Pond. They are also sometimes seen in Little River and at Little Pond. This year they built three lodges made of pickerelweed in the storm water wetlands, and two embankment lodges. That is a lot compared to last year, when they built one embankment and one lodge. Muskrats also built a lodge made from cattails on the north side of the river near the picnic benches in the horseshoe water area along Acorn Park Drive near the parking lot. They also built another embankment lodge at Yates Pond on the east most side around the willow trees. I have also seen muskrats at Little Pond swimming along the shore across from where you can look out onto Little Pond or ten feet from that same spot. I have also seen a muskrat at Blair Pond where I believe they have another embankment lodge. Muskrats use Little River to swim through the reservation quickly and move to different ponds. Muskrats are the most common aquatic mammal and are the most common in the stormwater wetlands, where their numbers have increased dramatically in just a few short years.
- **Otter:** I have reason to believe that river otters still travel to the reservation. I have never seen one, but I have found many clam shells along Perch Pond that I know were not there before. Last Spring I also found a dead carp along the path in between Perch Pond and the original bank stabilization spot. The carp was eaten by an otter and not a coyote or other animal because it was eaten near an old otter rolling bank and some species of clams were also found nearby. At Little Pond I also saw there was an old otter bank den and there were also some clams. Clams eaten ranged in size from 4 inches to 6 inches. Most clams were found at Perch Pond, and this leads me to believe that otter still visit the reservation in search of food.
- **Raccoons:** Raccoons are very common and are most common in the north trail about ½ a mile down the trail around an old otter rolling site and around Perch Pond. Raccoons tracks are commonly found throughout the north trail, at Blair Pond, at Yates Pond and in the stormwater wetlands. I found a dead raccoon in the stormwater wetlands this fall under a part of

the boardwalk at the beginning of the wetlands, yet after the forebay. Insect scavengers had already started to feed on it and there were no signs to indicate its death was unnatural. Raccoon walk along all portions of Little River and the ponds (Blair, Yates, Little, Perch). Raccoon tracks are the most common tracks that I find other than deer tracks.

- **Shrews, Mice, and Voles:** This year I found four dead shrews, along the meadow in the stormwater wetlands next to the oxbow and in the North trail about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile down just after Perch Pond at a known vole meadow. I don't know how or why these shrews died. I believe that their population is stable and that they have plenty of habitat in the meadows, but I worry about encroaching phragmites in the North trail taking over the meadow and pushing the voles and shrews out. Also at the same meadow there is a tree swallow nest box that during the winter mice commonly nest in to wait out the cold. This year I found 5 mice in this nest box and three at nest boxes at Blair Pond.
- **Squirrels and Chipmunks:** There are many grey squirrels in Alewife Reservation and they commonly eat acorns from eastern oaks. They are most common on the south side of the river and the North trail. Chipmunks are also very common and are seen mostly at Blair Pond and the whole north side of the river.
- **Woodchucks:** woodchucks are the most common at Blair Pond, where I have seen them foraging plants, and even climbing on top of bittersweet vines to eat berries high up in the trees. They also venture into the stormwater wetlands but I have reason to believe that they might have a den near Blair Pond because they are there almost every time I go to Blair Pond, and if I don't see them then I see evidence of them like broken branches, foraged grass, or scat.
- **Birds:**
  - **Birds Of Prey:**
    - **Bald Eagle:** Last fall I saw a bald eagle flying over the stormwater wetlands. Though I didn't see any this fall, other observers have seen them at Little Pond eating fish and flying over. In April I saw one flying over Route 2 coming from the reservation. It looked very healthy and was a fully grown adult. I believe that the number of bald eagle sightings will increase over the next few years.
    - **Broad winged Hawk:** Broad winged hawks are not as common as other hawks but I have seen them flying over and sometimes sitting on buildings. I used to see them more often, about three times a year (mostly in the fall), but this year I only saw the same broad wing two times.

- **Cooper's Hawk:** Cooper's hawk is another not so common hawk; the sharp shinned hawk is much more common. Still, I have seen them at least twice this year along the north trail flying over head.
- **Osprey:** Two years ago I saw an osprey hunting over Little Pond, though I have not seen any since. I did, however, find a secondary feather just before the entrance to the north trail.
- **Red-Tailed Hawk:** Red tailed hawks are the most common bird of prey in Alewife Reservation and I found quite a few kills from them. During the fall last year I found red tail feathers and bones scattered around near Little Pond about 1000 feet down the trail. The hawk I believe was killed by a coyote. From the scene I could tell that there was a cotton tail that was being stalked because I found some scat and fur, but there were also coyote prints. What I believe happened was the coyote and red tail were both hunting the cottontail and the hawk flew down scaring the cotton tail and the coyote, being opportunistic, attacked the hawk. I know a mink didn't eat it because the head was still attached, and the feathers were torn out like goose kills from coyote. I also saw during this fall a red tail eating a squirrel. It was about ten feet high up in a tree, and was picking apart the body and throwing away what it didn't want. I was able to stand about 15 feet diagonally under the hawk and could see every detail of its feeding behavior. In February I also saw one before the North trail eating a squirrel on the ground. Even just last week in May I saw a hawk flying over and landing on a nearby building. I believe that the red tail population is healthy and increasing, I have also noticed that they tend to migrate a little earlier and stay longer as well leaving in December or even February in some cases.
- **Merlin:** This was the first year that I have ever seen a merlin, and it was amazing. In February I saw one in the woodlands of the stormwater wetlands in an aspen tree eating a song sparrow. It was harassed by blue jays and robins, yet it persisted and went on eating until it left about thirty minutes later. I am not sure if another will return but it was not threatened by my presence right under it and treading through snow around it. I believe it is possible that we will see another next year hunting and continuing to migrate.
- **Sharp Shinned Hawk:** Sharp shinned hawks are also very common and I have seen them on a frequent basis in the fall. This year I found a kill from one in the North trail. It had eaten a mourning dove and left some feathers and scat on a log about a ¼ of mile into the North trail. I also saw a belted kingfisher chasing a sharp shinned at Yates Pond across the water in October. They

broke off and flew separate ways. Sharp shinned hawks are common and I see them flying over a lot in the fall and sometimes sitting on trees along Little River.

- **Blackbirds:**
  - **Red-wing Black Bird:** Red-wing black birds are common and are here through spring and summer. They even have a few nests in the North trail in phragmites patches and in cattail marshes on the south side of the river and before the north trail. They commonly fish for bugs in the stormwater wetlands, sitting among the pickerelweed and catching food. Red-wing black birds are very common and I see at least twenty different males and females every day during the summer.
  - **Common Grackle:** Grackles are not as common as red wing black birds but are more common along the north trail and before the North trail on the whole north side of the river and at Blair Pond.
- **Cardinals:**
  - **Northern Cardinal:** Northern cardinals are common and are frequently seen year-round everywhere in the reservation.
- **Chickadees and Titmice:**
  - **Black Capped Chickadee:** Our state bird is seen most frequently during winter and fall, around the stormwater wetlands, the North trail, and Blair Pond. I believe that I have been seeing less and less of them over the years, though I still certainly see black capped chickadees I see less than I used to and I'm not sure why.
  - **Tufted Titmouse:** The same goes for tufted titmice as with black capped chickadees.
- **Cormorants:**
  - **Double Crested Cormorant:** Cormorants are seen at Little Pond and Yates Pond fishing and sunbathing. There is usually just one at a time at Yates but there can be as many a five or ten at Little Pond. They travel here in the spring, fall and sometimes summer.
- **Crows:**
  - **American Crow:** Crows are not very common and I only see them during late summer and fall through winter. They are usually on the north side of the river or flying over.
- **Doves:**
  - **Mourning Dove:** Mourning doves are common year round are seen every time I go on a walk, they inhabit every part of the reservation and like the north side of the river, the stormwater

wetlands woodland, and Blair Pond the most. Their population is stable and very healthy.

- **Ducks:**

- **American Black Duck:** American black duck are only seen during winter and I only saw five different ones this winter, much less than the 13 from last year. They travel up and down the river with mallards and commonly sit at Little Pond and the ox bow with slower flowing slightly warmer water. Their population fluctuates and they travel between Fresh pond and Alewife so I'm not sure how many there will be next year.
- **American Wigeon:** This year I found a male and female american wigeon along acorn park drive in a small pond next to office buildings. It was in january and they looked very healthy and comfortable. This is the first time that I have seen them in the reservation and I'm not sure if they will return.
- **Common Merganser:** Despite the name they are not all that common. They are however common for about two weeks where in the winter about 20 males and females sit at Little Pond and fish and swim. I have sometimes seen them swimming at the end of Little River near the T, yet that is not common, they prefer Little Pond.
- **Green Wing Teal:** This I was surprised to see four green wing teals. In the early spring in late March I saw a female swimming along with some mallards and in the spring I saw two males and a female swimming again in the stormwater wetlands. This surprised me for two reasons; one I normally see them only in the summer not the spring, so they migrated earlier, and two there was a lot of them. Four may not sound like a lot yet last year I only saw one male and two years ago only a pair. They were all very skittish and are strangely only seen in the stormwater wetland with the most people. I don't know what the population will be next year.
- **Hooded Merganser:** Hooded mergansers are a favorite of mine and I love to see them during the winter. This year I found 14 different males and females traveling back and forth from the end of Little River to Little Pond. They also travel to Yates Pond and sometimes to Blair Pond. They are commonly seen swimming around Perch Pond and like the widening of the river where they can rest on logs and swim to Blair or Little Pond. Yet they are most common at Little Pond where they will even come up on the land, I know because I spoke on once and it flew into the water. I believe that their population is stable and doesn't increase but it doesn't decrease either.

- **Mallard:** Mallards are the most common duck in Alewife Reservation and are here year round and are seen every place in the reservation.
- **Northern Shoveler:** Northern shovelers are not very common and I only saw one this year at the ox bow at the stormwater wetlands. I believe that their population is decreasing in Alewife and I am gradually seeing less and less each year.
- **Finches:**
  - **American Goldfinch:** American goldfinches are very common and are commonly seen eating seeds of thistle. They are most common before the north trail and at Blair Pond. About four years ago mostly thistle grew along Yates Pond and as Japanese knotweed grew and pushed out the thistle the goldfinches stopped showing up at Yates and moved to different places. That said their population is stable and I don't see much change.
  - **House Finch:** House finches are common along the train tracks leading to Blair Pond and right before the North trail in the meadow. They are not as common as other birds but are still an annual visitor here in spring, summer and fall.
  - **Purple Finch:** Same as House finch.
- **Flycatchers:**
  - **Alder Flycatcher:** Alder flycatchers are the most common flycatcher in Alewife and are commonly seen along Little River and before the North trail. They also visit the stormwater wetlands and Blair Pond a lot. They have a stable summer population and are here for most of the summer months.
  - **Eastern Kingbird:** Eastern kingbirds are very common and are commonly seen in the stormwater wetlands and before the North trail. They are more common than the alder flycatcher and are a frequent summer visitor that likes to sit in the oaks along Acorn Park Drive.
  - **Eastern Phoebe:** Eastern phoebes are not very common yet I do see them yearly in the stormwater wetland and along the North trail mostly about 1/2-3/4 of the way down the trail around Perch Pond. They show up at the reservation in the summer months and are not very common.
- **Geese:**
  - **Canada Geese:** Canada geese are by far the most common water bird. They are in every body of water and like to feed on grass in the meadow before the North trail. They sometimes nest at the

oxbow and along the forebay. They have a very stable population and are very happy in the reservation as long as swans don't attack them.

- **Gulls:**

- **Ring-Billed Gull:** Ring billed Gulls are a winter visitor and are common at Little Pond during winter months where they feed and rest.
- **Great Black Backed Gull:** Same as Ring billed.

- **Jays:**

- **Blue Jay:** Blue jays are a very common bird and are aggressive, going as far as to harass crows, grackles, and any hawk that enters their territory. They travel in groups of five to ten and are mainly seen before the North Trail and at Blair Pond and the stormwater wetlands. I have even seen them eating duck eggs in the stormwater wetlands. They are here year round and have a stable population that I believe is increasing.

- **Kingfishers:**

- **Belted Kingfisher:** The belted kingfisher is a yearly fall and winter visitor. And even summer. The kingfisher is common and I have seen three separate ones this year, two male and one female. Their population has increased a little bit over time. They prefer to stay along Little River and the ponds and don't often venture into the stormwater wetlands, except to the oxbow. They mostly fish around Perch Pond where on the south bank there are plenty of trees that they sit on. They also are seen at Yates Pond and at Blair Pond. Their population is very healthy and they can be heard through the reservation and seen flying over head through the late summer and fall.

- **Kinglets:**

- **Golden Crowned:** A very rare visitor of Alewife Reservation Golden crowned kinglets are not very common and I have only seen them a few times along the border of the North trail just before the entrance.
- **Ruby Crowned:** The ruby crowned kinglet is even rarer than the golden and I have only seen it once.

- **Mimids:**

- **Grey Catbird:** Grey catbirds are a common summer and spring visitor and are very easy to find along the North trail, particularly about ¼ of a mile in. They are also common along the south side at the stormwater wetlands, and Blair Pond.

- **Northern Mockingbird:** Northern mockingbirds are a year round visitor and are very common and are seen before the North trail and on the south side of the river most commonly. Their population has increased in recent years and I find their nests quite often.
- **Nuthatches:**
  - **White Breasted Nuthatch:** White breasted nuthatches are common and I believe that their population is increasing, because I have been seeing them more and more in the north trail and before the north trail. They are most common before the North trail climbing oaks, maples and the locust trees.
- **Orioles:**
  - **Baltimore Oriole:** Baltimore orioles I believe are migrating earlier. I usually see them in the summer time and late summer, but this year I saw them as early as late April. They are also one of the most common nests that I find, I have counted 2 nests on the north side of the river and 5 on the south side. Interestingly enough most of their nests are in aspens. Their population is migrating earlier but it is also very stable and I usually see about 6 different oriels each year.
- **ShoreBirds:**
  - **American Woodcock:** This year is the second year that I saw an American woodcock, in April. I saw it in the North trail near a lek about a ¼ of a mile into the trail. It flew past me and I never saw it again. Last year I also saw one on the south side past the stormwater wetlands in a cattail marsh. I believe that their population has decreased over the years but it is so far stable with only a few individuals that migrate in.
  - **Killdeer:** About four years ago I watched as a pair raised a family of 4 baby killdeer. No there are not that many killdeer, for the past two years I only see one pair in the meadow before the North trail each year now. I believe that their population decreased due to development next to route two where they would nest.
  - **Solitary Sandpiper:** The solitary sandpiper has three common spots that it hunts for bugs at and is commonly seen. At Blair Pond along the mud flats, at the end of Little River where there is a large clay patch, and along Perch Pond where they fly from log to long and bank to bank hunting. Their population is stable and healthy.
- **Sparrows:**

- **Chipping Sparrow:** Chipping sparrows are seen in the stormwater wetlands during the winter months and are a common winter visitor.
- **Dark eyed Junco:** Dark eyed juncos are a common late summer early fall visitor and they stay in to the winter as well. They are very common and will be seen in groups of fifty in the meadows of the stormwater wetlands or before the North trail. Their population is very healthy and they are a common migrate visitor.
- **Song Sparrow:** Song sparrows are the most common sparrow and are here year round and are prey for different bird eating hawks and other hunters. They are most common in the stormwater wetlands and are seen through the reservation.
- **White Throated Sparrow:** White throated sparrows are very common throughout the reservation and they are commonly seen along the ponds and stormwater wetlands.
- **Swallows:**
  - **Cliff Swallow:** Cliff swallows are not very common but are seen during the spring months flying over the ox bow hunting for bug and along Little River. They are not very common but when they are her they ar many of them.
  - **Tree Swallow:** Tree swallow are the most common swallow and are seen through the reservation and have nest boxes that they use in the north trail and before the north rail. They are commonly seen around Little River hunting for bugs and at Blair Pond, and Little Pond closer to dusk. They are a stable bird species and are very common and their population hasn't changed much.
- **Swans:**
  - **Mute Swan:** Mute swans are invasive and this year they made two nests one at Little Pond that I could walk up to, and found broken pieces of shells, it is unclear whether or not the eggs were eaten or just hatched on their own. The other nest is at Yates Pond and people watch it as they walk by to go to the train. The male and female have been making nest for some time now and make them throught the reservation, last year they made on in the stormwater wetland and abandoned it. They chase away geese from making nests and a a problem for other nesting pairs.
- **Thrushes:**
  - **American Robin:** Robins are the most common bird in the entire reservation and are here year round. They are in every part of the reservation and have a stable population.

- **Hermit Thrush:** This year I saw a hermit thrush along the boardwalk of the storm water wetlands about 800 feet in along the woodlands. I saw it in November. It didn't stay long before it flew into the forest and I never saw it again.
- **Wild Turkeys:** Wild turkeys are most common in two places; the end of the north trail where in the fall and spring months they eat bugs from dried vernal pools and raise young, and at Blair Pond in the summer time. They are very common and i estimate that there are about 15 total.
- **Wading Birds:**
  - **Black Crowned Night Heron:** This year black crowned knight herons migrated early. Typically I see them in the mid to late summer, but this year I saw a pair an adult male and juvenile flying around Little Pond in May. They are the least common heron at the reservation and are seldom seen, yet their population is stable with usually two per year.
  - **Great Blue Heron:** Great blue herons are the most common heron and one of the most common birds, there is a resident male and probably resident females and other males as well. This year I have seen 6 different herons, in each season. They are a year round visitor and sit in Little River durring with winter, or the alewife brook channel, and during the summer they stay along the river mainly at Little Pond where they sit on overhanging branches, or at Perch Pond where they wade in the water. They also like the stormwater wetlands anc I have frequently seen them catch fish there including catfish and fully grown largemouth bass. This year they made a nest at Jerry's pit next to the Alewife T. Their population is healthy and stable and they have been increasing in number in recent years.
  - **Green Heron:** Green herons are not very common but are here during the summer months. They stay mainly at Yates Pond, the stormwater wetlands, or before the north trail in the little horseshoe pond there. They are a common summer visitor and have a healthy population of about four herons.
- **Waxwings:**
  - **Cedar Waxwing:** Cedar waxwings are common in the fall and late summer. I have noticed over the past five years a decrease in their population and have seen fewer and fewer of them each year. They mainly reside along the bike path along the stormwater wetlands and right before the North trail. They can be seen eating winter berries and foraging through the fall, and are less common in the summer but are still present.

- **Warblers:**

- **Northern Water Thrush:** I have only seen a northern water thrush once and cannot really speak to their population on the reservation I saw it at the end of Little River, near the alewife T along a clay flat in the river it was fishing for bugs and other insects. It was calm and I was able to get fairly close to it.
- **Yellow Rumped Warbler:** Yellow rumped warblers are common in the fall migration season, with males and females throughout the woodlands of the stormwater wetlands and right before the north trail. Their population this year migrated in early and I did not see them as much as a result, but I believe that they have a stable population, nonetheless.
- **Yellow Warbler:** Yellow warblers are the most common warbler and are seen throughout the spring and summer into fall. They inhabit every part of the reservation and are very common in the stormwater wetlands, Blair Pond, Little Pond and before the North trail, and select parts of the north trail around Perch Pond. Their population is healthy and I frequently see them throughout the year.

- **Woodpeckers:**

- **Downy:** Downy woodpeckers are the most common woodpecker in Alewife Reservation and are commonly seen in all parts of the reservation. They have a healthy and stable population and are seen on a daily basis.
- **Hairy:** Hairy woodpeckers are less common yet still common, they mainly reside in the north trail, and right before the North trail. They are not seen as often as the downy, yet are frequently heard flyin through the reservation.
- **Red-Bellied:** Although uncommon I have seen red-bellied woodpeckers on two separate occasions, along acorn park drive on the north side of the road in some dead trees, where there are some old woodpecker holes, and right before the north trail in a locust tree climbing up and down the tree. Their population is stable and though the are uncommon in alewife they are still here.
- **Northern Flicker:** Northern flickers are common though I have been seeing less and less of them over the years. Three years ago I would find many feathers from them in the north trail, and I barely find any feathers from them now. They are most commonly seen among the fitchburg cut off along the train tracks and along acorn park drive and right before the North trail.

- **Yellow-Bellied Sap Sucker:** I have only seen a yellow bellied-sap sucker once on the reservation in the past year. I saw it in the north trail about a ¼ mile into the trail around some tributaries of Little River climbing up a oak tree. They are so uncommon in Alewife that I cannot speak to their population status.
- **Wrens:**
  - **Carolina Wren:** I saw a pair of carolina wrens this past April near Little Pond in the North trail. They are not very common yet also have a stable population and are common enough.
  - **House Wren:** A pair of house wrens were seen in the North trail in the fall around Perch Pond and some pairs made a nest in a nest box at Blair Pond. Their population is very healthy and they common throughout most of the reservation.
- **Reptiles/Amphibians:**
  - **Frogs:** The reservation hosts green frogs and bullfrogs, and they are most common in the stormwater wetlands. During the spring and summer on any given day there could be between thirty- fifty frogs out. They like to sit along the shoreline and are very common. They are also seen at the oxbow, and at Blair Pond, yet not with such vast numbers.
  - **Snakes:** Alewife has two snakes, garter snakes and eastern ribbon snakes. Both are harmless and very common. I have seen them through the reservation in the Stormwater wetlands, in the north trail, and at Blair Pond. They range in length from six inches to about a foot and a half, which leads me to believe that they have a very healthy population and multiple generations.
  - **Turtles:**
    - **Painted Turtles:** Painted turtles are the most common turtle and are found in every body of Alewife Reservation. Young are most common at Yates Pond and in the stormwater wetlands, and fully grown adults are most common at Yates Pond, Perch Pond, and Blair Pond. I find many nests that have been dug up most likely by raccoons. During the fall I found about 15 nests, with fragments of eggs that hatched or were dug up. Nests have been found before the North trail, at Blair Pond, and through the stormwater wetlands. They are very common and have a healthy population.
    - **Snapping turtles:** Last year I found four separate snapping turtles. Two fully grown adults that traverse the whole river have been seen at Yates Pond in the early morning, the stormwater wetlands usually during the afternoon, and walking around Perch Pond looking for food. I also found a juvenile snapping turtle at Perch Pond about a foot in length. The other snapping turtle was a baby

about 5 inches found right before the North trail in some mud along the shore.

- **Toads:** The only toads that we have on the reservation that I have seen is the American toad. I saw an adult twice, once about a ¼ mile down the north trail, and another time about ¾ of a mile down the trail. Though during the summer I commonly find their young hopping through all of the reservations meadows. Toads are not very common in Alewife, yet every now and then I will find some of them.
- **Insects:** Alewife has a very healthy insect population and I believe that the insect population has been growing steadily over the past 10 years. This year I found a stable dragonfly and damselfly population that moves through the entire reservation. Dragonflies are most diverse at Blair Pond and the stormwater wetlands. This year I also found very healthy bee, wasp and ant populations. The two plants that bees pollinate most are goldenrod and Japanese knotweed. Butterflies are very abundant and are commonly seen in every part of the reservation. The most common species of butterfly are tiger swallowtails and cabbage whites. This year was also the first year I saw four different monarchs, mostly in the stormwater wetlands. This year I also found four different mantids: three in the stormwater wetlands and one at Blair Pond. There is also a wealth of true bugs in the reservation mostly assassin bugs and stink bugs. There are also many different beetles, mostly small fungus beetles, bark, and ground beetles. The insect population is very healthy and is most prominent at Blair Pond, the stormwater wetlands, and right before the North trail.
- **Fish:** The fish population in Alewife is very healthy, and this year was the first year that I actually saw Alewife herring. I saw about 30 Alewife at Yates Pond along the shoreline in April 2017. I have also seen many largemouth bass at Little Pond, Yates Pond, and in the stormwater wetlands. During fall I watched a blue heron catch a fully grown largemouth bass in the stormwater wetlands. I also saw a blue heron catch two catfish this past May. Catfish are fairly common, yet are also the only fish that I regularly find dead at points of the year. During early August I found about 15 dead catfish in the forebay of the stormwater wetlands. They were emaciated and had tumors. They seemed to be the only animals affected since turtles, frogs, and minnows were all fine. This past May I also found two dead catfish in the exit channel to Little River from the stormwater wetlands. The other prominent fish in Alewife Reservation is the common carp. Carp are found in every part of the reservation and are the dominant fish. That said I believe that the fish population in Alewife this year is healthier than three years ago.