

Meet Conservation Commissioner Luke Faust

**BY ROBERT BOSSO,
CONSERVATION ASSISTANT**

Enthusiastically stepping into the spot formerly occupied by the well-respected and veteran member Richard Morse, Luke Faust is the newest member of your Conservation Commission. Appointed by the Select Board in May of this year, he joins Chair David Henkels, Vice Chair Ken Holtz, Jeremy Cook, Bruce Porter, Kathleen Rogers, and Bruce Porter in stewarding Sudbury's wetland resources and open spaces on behalf of the community. He will serve a three-year term, and will be up for re-appointment in 2026.

Like many Sudbury residents, not least the members of the Commission, Luke has long had a deep affinity for the natural world. In college, he pursued a degree in Biology. His ecological research endeavors carried him to such far-flung locales as Lake Superior's Isle Royale National Park, South Africa, and the Central Pacific. The call of the natural world has also resounded in his subsequent career path. He currently works as a Financial Planning & Analysis Manager for the Appalachian Mountain Club, the eminent outdoor recreation and conservation nonprofit. There, he is responsible for ensuring that the organization's conservation goals can be achieved while simultaneously navigating the shoals of financial constraints.

It was about three years ago that a phone call with the Town's Conservation Coordinator, Lori Capone, sparked a series of events that ultimately led Luke to his current role. At the time, he was studying in Mass Audubon's Birder Program. As part of his certificate work, it was decided that he would conduct a



*Conservation Commissioner and bird enthusiast
Luke Faust.*

survey of bird species at Davis Farm, one of the many Town-owned open spaces overseen by the Commission. The survey was carried out over a year, during which 58 species were identified. Luke would go on to present his results to the Commission, which he joined as an Associate Member in May of 2021.

Luke has continued his involvement with the annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC), a venerable, on-going community science project now in its 122nd year. This is a single-day survey, conducted across the Americas, where volunteers count as many birds as possible within the allotted time. Luke is responsible for coordinating Sudbury's contingent of volunteers. In 2022, a Sudbury team of twenty individuals recorded 2,252 individual birds representing 53 species. The aggregated CBC data is of extremely high value to ornithologists and conservationists examining long-term population ecological dynamics, and has been cited in hundreds of scientific journal publications.

Luke Faust, Continued

Birding continues to be an important way for Luke to stay connected with nature. It also happens to be an engaging way for him to spend time outdoors with his family. This includes his wife, Chelsea, and daughter, Juliet. Ever alert for a tell-tale song lilting from across a meadow, or a swift-winged motion in the tree canopy, they hike the open spaces of Massachusetts and beyond. Occasionally, they are rewarded with the thrill of checking off another box on their checklist of bird species.

Asked about what he hopes to accomplish during his tenure as Commissioner, Luke stated that he hopes “to serve the community in helping to figure out how to balance the challenges of development pressure and importance of wild green space to build climate resilience.” With multiple complex

construction projects regularly falling under the Commission’s authority, such as the two on-going Rail Trail projects, the Town relies on the commitment of talented and dedicated citizen volunteers. Please join the Conservation Commission in welcoming Luke, and wishing him the best of luck in the fulfillment of his duties.

The Conservation Commission is a seven-member, all-volunteer committee, primarily tasked with the administration of the Wetland Protection Act and the Sudbury Wetlands Administration Bylaw. It also oversees the town’s portfolio of Conservation Lands. *The Commission is currently seeking a conscientious Town resident to serve their community as an Associate Member. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please [contact us](#).*