

Article submission for *Redding Pilot*

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Highstead Open House and Trails Day Features Lecture on Wildlife and Urban Sprawl

Dr. Stephen DeStefano to discuss his new book,
Coyote at the Kitchen Door: Living with Wildlife in Suburbia

A moose frustrates commuters by wandering onto the highway; a cougar stalks his prey through suburban backyards; an alligator suns himself in a strip mall parking lot. Such stories, which regularly make the headline news, highlight the blurred divide that now exists between civilization and wilderness.

Highstead will enliven its annual open house and trails day on Saturday, June 11th with a lecture and discussion led by University of Massachusetts biologist and conservationist Dr. Stephen DeStefano on his new book, *Coyote at the Kitchen Door: Living in the Wildlife in Suburbia*. Dr. Stefano will discuss the effects of urban and suburban development on the landscape, wildlife and people.

As he explores what our insatiable appetite for real estate means for the health and wellbeing of animals and ourselves, Dr. Stefano will highlight growing concerns, such as the loss of darkness at night because of light pollution. He'll discuss the contrasts between constructed and natural environments and the sometimes cherished, sometimes feared place that nature holds in our modern lives, as we cluster into cities yet show an increasing interest in the natural world.

Highstead invites the public to tour the grounds and trails of its 150-acre nature sanctuary from 10am to 2pm. This free event features tours, food, and Dr. DeStefano's book discussion. Highstead is located at 127 Lonetown Road in Redding.

Bill Toomey, Highstead's Director, said, "Highstead's gorgeous woodlands, trails, and unique laurel collection has been a gift to the greater Redding community for over 29 years, yet most folks are not fully aware that we also actively support cutting-edge science and field research focused on protecting woodlands throughout New England. We invite our friends and neighbors to get to know us, enjoy our land, and join us in ensuring that future generations enjoy it, too."

Open House Schedule for Saturday, June 11th at Highstead: Trails will be open for self-guided tours starting at 10am. A guided tour by Highstead Ecologist Ed Faison is from 10:30-12:30pm. Lecture by Dr. DeStefano is from 1-2pm. Seats are limited for the lecture so the public is encouraged to RSVP to jcologgi@highstead.net or 203-938-8809 to reserve a seat.

Highstead is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting New England's natural landscapes.