



The Pause of Winter

The summer to fall season is time for the Northern Hemisphere to produce our food—to do the cooking, so to speak. From fall to spring our lands take a break. Barrington Hills Farm, where the organic fields are now getting some rest, are quietly preparing for the next year's crops by stocking up on water and nutrients. It's time this winter for the Southern Hemisphere to feed the world.

I enjoy taking photos at Barrington Hills Farm, with every season offering an undisturbed view into wide open spaces filled with animal life. There are the occasional inanimate objects as well, like the farm's silo, fences, and rows of trees. In the case of the partially submerged tractor, it is believed to be a F-27 International Farmall from about 1927. We were told it was already in this isolated farm pond prior to 1966 and no one knows who left it there.


The three maple trees pictured during a blizzard are survivors from way back. They, and maybe a dozen more that are gone, had bordered a gravel lane into a field off of Spring Creek Road for years. Barrington Hills Farm has replaced all the missing trees on the lane with equally colorful 15- to 20-foot tall hardy maples. Maple Lane was a beautiful spot to photograph in the past and will be again soon.

Well done!

The pair of Sandhill Cranes did not come back north early, as you might think. They got dumped on by a late and nasty storm. There was no noisy

“romancing” the morning I saw them. They are such interesting birds to observe. There are always at least two pair of them trying to raise a brood on the farm's 700 acres. They are successful less than half the time. This past year, three egrets kept a Sandhills nest hostage for the entire nesting period. Two colts did hatch, but they disappeared within a week. Another pair's nest over on Spring Creek was flooded out. But then one time a youngster on one of its first takeoffs almost knocked my Cubs cap off ... that was the year they won the pennant. Good things happen out here, too.

I drove through Barrington Hills Farm the evening before I shot this photo of a disgruntled looking dove huddling in a snow-covered bush. At that time there were at least 150 other doves lined up on power lines with all of them seemingly ready to go—just waiting for a signal. An early winter snowstorm was moving in and they were moving out—well at least 149 of them were. This one didn't go.

Deer and squirrels of course are used to snow. They have to work a little harder to scratch through to food. This deer came out of a Barrington Hills Farm woods during a snowstorm and just stood there and watched me as I took photos of him from my car. What a thrill! 

Paul McFadden has lived in unincorporated Algonquin for nearly 50 years. Barrington Hills Farm offers opportunities for his camera work with nature. He may be reached at: Circa6936@gmail.com.



www.barringtonhillsfarm.org

Barrington Hills Farm is 700 acres of pristine, undeveloped land located at Haegers Bend and Spring Creek Roads in the northwestern most corner of Barrington Hills. The rarity of Barrington Hills lies in its open space, fresh air, clean water, and abundant wildlife. The land is precious and delicate and in constant need of stewardship to keep it that way.