

**Please note walks meet at different times. Some trips are weather dependent.
Please call trip leader if in doubt.**



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

Saturday, March 24 (1 pm – 3 pm)

The Hidden Life of Vernal Pools: Forest and Vernal Pool Exploration at Webster Woods

Trip Leader: Eric Olson (617-872-9928)

Join us in Webster Woods, Newton's largest conservation area, as we walk the woods and explore the large vernal pool found there. Vernal pools, because of periods of drying, do not support breeding populations of fish. Many organisms have evolved to use a temporary wetland that will dry but where they are not eaten by fish. These organisms are the "obligate" vernal pool species, so called because they must use a vernal pool for various parts of their life cycle. Join us as we investigate the obligate vernal pool species, including fairy shrimp, mole salamanders and the wood frog. "Herps" (reptiles and amphibians) are the stars of the show but we will also botanize. Sampling equipment will be provided; bring hand lenses if you have them. We will walk even in the rain; dress accordingly. Meet at the end of Warren Street on the western edge of Webster Conservation Area or (for those not up to a 1 mile hike round-trip) meet up with the group at 2 PM in the back parking lot (far back) of Congregation Mishkan Tefila; the vernal pool is right here.



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

Sunday, April 22 (2 pm)

Finding Newton's Old Waterworks at Cutler Park (Rain or shine)

Walk Leader: Lucy Caldwell Stair

Few people walking through the woods in Cutler Park realize that the park is the site of a waterworks constructed by Newton in the 1870s to supply the City with clean water. Guided by old diagrams and photos, we will locate the old pumps and wells along the 1-mile trail and visualize how this elaborate engineering system worked. Extra option: a 1/2-mile walk along the site of the old filter basins and the pumping station at Needham Street. Meet at the Cutler Park DCR parking lot on Kendrick Street just across the Charles River in Needham.

Saturday, April 28 (10 am)

Spring Migrants Bird Walk

Walk Leaders: Sonja Wadman (857-231-1558); Ted Kuklinski (617-332-7753), Alison Leary (617-821-5619) Co-sponsored by Newton Conservators and Waltham Land Trust

Join expert birders from the Newton Conservators and the Waltham Land Trust as we identify early spring migrants along the Charles River between the Waltham Watch Factory and Auburndale Park. Bring your binoculars to see red winged blackbirds, tree swallows, eastern phoebes, yellow-rumped, palm and yellow warblers. We will also observe many of our resident species of cardinals, downy woodpeckers, blue jays, chickadees and tufted titmice in full breeding mode. If we're lucky, we may also spy Carolina wrens, red-bellied woodpeckers, and some raptors including red-tailed and cooper's hawks. Remember your bird lists! Meet at Waltham Watch Factory, 183 Crescent St, Waltham



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

Sunday, April 29 (10 am)

Saw Mill Brook Park Garlic Mustard Pull. A NewtonSERVES Project

Trip Leader: Katherine Howard (617-527-1796 home; 617-721-2571 cell)

Garlic Mustard, a native of Europe that probably came here as a garden herb, has now invaded our backyards, parks, forests and conservation areas. It is high up on the federal/state official list of plant invaders threatening our environment. It will quickly cover vast areas and low light forested areas, shading out other plants, chemically altering the soil to inhibit germination of competitor seeds, and altering the habitat for native insects such as butterflies. However, in areas where it is just starting to invade, it only takes a small amount of effort to be rid of it. It is a biennial very easily identified and pulled when the second year plants are flowering in April/May. If not pulled, each plant will scatter hundreds to thousands of seeds later in the season that will become first year plants the next year, and also remain as viable seeds for several more years. Sturdy shoes, long pants, long sleeves and work gloves recommended. Meet at the parking lot on Vine Street.



PHOTO: TED KUKLINSKI

Sunday, April 29 (10 am)

Garlic Mustard Pull at Blue Heron Bridge. A NewtonSERVES Project

Trip leader: Eric Olson (617-872-9928)

This is the fourth year working along the Charles River Greenway at this bridge site, helping the Trustees of the Reservations with their stewardship of the floodplain forest. We will again mix in some general nature study so bring binoculars and an insect net and hand lens if you have them. Park at the Pleasant Street Super Stop-N-Shop parking lot in Watertown at the corner furthest from the store. This spot is directly in front of you as you enter the parking lot from Pleasant Street. There is a path entrance there. Turn left and follow path to the bridge.



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

Sunday, April 29 (10 am)

Garlic Mustard Pull at Dolan Pond. A NewtonSERVES Project

Trip Leader: Ted Kuklinski (617-332-7753)

Meet at Dolan Pond conservation area in W. Newton. Street Parking is available near the four entrances at Auburndale Avenue, Webster Park, Stratford and Cumberland. Recent (February 2012) surveys found a new garlic mustard stand in an off-trail corner of the property and a few patches of rosettes in previously worked areas. Come help us eradicate this soil-damaging invasive from this gem of a pocket park. Crews also removed nearly every knotweed stem from one area, but knotweed removal takes years to complete, and each time it gets easier. We will mix in some general nature study so bring binoculars and hand lenses for observing birds, bugs, flowers, and a good variety of pond life.

Sunday, April 29 (10 am)

Invasive Pull at Nahanton Park. A NewtonSERVES project

Trip Leader: Jane Sender (617-462-8425)

Many native habitats, including grassland and open woodland habitats, are all threatened by invasive plants. They out-compete native plants, reduce biodiversity and may negatively impact birdlife. Nahanton Park is one of many of our open spaces suffering from infestations of non-native, invasive plant species, including black swallowwort, multiflora rose, tree of heaven, and black locust seedlings. Join us in preserving the beauty and diversity of this special park by spending a few hours cutting back/removing these invasive species. Sturdy shoes, long pants, long sleeves and work gloves recommended. Meet in the large parking lot off Winchester Street.



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

Wednesday, May 2 (6 pm)

Newton Conservators Annual Meeting

Location: American Legion Post 440, 225 California Street, Newton 02460. Don't forget to attend the annual meeting—with this year's keynote speaker Dr. Douglas Tallamy, Professor of Entomology and Wildlife Conservation at University of Delaware, and author of "Bringing Nature Home." Register at www.newtonconservators.org.



Sunday, May 6 (10 am)

Garlic Mustard Pull at Cold Spring Park

Trip leader: Katherine Howard (617-527-1796 home; 617-721-2571 cell).

See above description of garlic mustard. Cold Spring Park is one area becoming infested with the highly invasive garlic mustard plant. We will spend a couple hours pulling along the Cochituate aqueduct walk, staying in upland areas away from wetlands. In case of poison ivy, wear long pants and garden gloves. Trash bags will be provided; the plants must be disposed of as trash, not as yard waste. Meet at the Dunklee Rd. entrance, at the Newton Highlands side of the park.



PHOTO: TED KUKLINSKI

Sunday, May 6 (10 am) Note: Correct time is 2pm, not 10am

Newton Aqueducts Hike

Trip leader: Henry Finch (617-964-4488).

This is a very popular 4-6 mile hike through woods, meadows and fields along the Newton sections of the Sudbury and Cochituate aqueducts. Parts of the paths traverse close to backyards, so hikers do need to be respectful of private property. This is a steady but not fast hike. Participants should be in sufficiently good shape to keep up with the group. (There are cutoffs for those who wish to shorten the hike). Meet in front of the Starbucks coffee shop near the Waban MBTA station.



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

Saturday, May 12 (2 pm - 4 pm)

Follow up Garlic Mustard Pull

Location: Beacon Street entrance to Cold Spring Park; meet at circle near soccer field

Trip leaders: Eric Olson (617-872-9928) and Katherine Howard (617-527-1796)

(Locations TBD). See above description of garlic mustard. Check with website (www.newtonconservators.org) or call leaders; locations will be chosen depending on where the need is greatest.

Sunday, May 13 (8 am)

Nahanton Park Mother's Day Bird Walk

Trip Leaders are Alison Leary (617-821-5619) and Haynes Miller,

Co-sponsored with Friends of Nahanton Park

Nahanton Park offers a mix of woodlands, wetlands, edge habitat and meadows along the Charles River, making it one of the best birding spots in Newton for both migratory and resident songbirds. Likely finds include brightly colored warblers, vireos, and orioles. Also expect bluebirds, scarlet tanagers, and swallows. Enter the park at the Nahanton Street entrance next to the river. Parking is available inside the park. Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome. Boots are recommended. Walk will be cancelled in steady rain.



PHOTO: DAN BRODY



PHOTO: RICHARD DANCA

Saturday May 19 (8 am)

Bird Walk at Cold Spring Park (Rain Date May 20)

Trip leader: Pete Gilmore (617-969-1513)

This 67-acre parcel has ample wooded areas, open fields, a brook and wetlands. It is one of the places in Newton where you may hear the call of the Great Horned Owl and observe spectacular songbirds like the rose breasted grosbeak and the indigo bunting. Also, frequently found at the park are many favorite migrants like the red-eyed vireo, the wood thrush, and a variety of wood warblers. Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners, as well as experienced birders are welcome. Enter the park at the Beacon Street entrance. Turn left and go to the far end of the parking lot to meet group.

Sunday, May 20 (2 pm)

Canoe/Kayak Trip at Nahanton Park

Trip leader: Bill Hagar (617-964-2644), Co-sponsored with friends of Nahanton Park

Join us for a canoe trip from Charles River Canoe & Kayak's newest location in Nahanton Park, on a 15-mile stretch of the Charles. Paddlers can enjoy 13 miles of calm water from upstream of Dedham Ave in Needham to Silk Mill Dam at Newton Upper Falls. (See above description of "Birding and Boating" Trip.) If you have your own canoe or kayak, you can put it in the water from this parking lot. Dress appropriately. We recommend you bring a hat, sunscreen, snacks and drinks. Thunderstorms will cancel the trip. Newton Conservator members get a 10% discount on canoe & kayak rentals. Meet at the Nahanton Street entrance next to the river. Parking is available inside the park.



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

Saturday June 3 (12 pm)

Fern Walk in West Webster Woods (Rain Date June 4)

Walk Leader: Don Lubin (617-254-8464) <http://nefern.info>

It will not yet be summer, but the ferns will be up. Join fern expert Don Lubin on the hunt for a dozen or more common fern species and a club-moss if we're lucky. Wear long pants for off-trail excursions, but the bugs should not be bad yet, the poison ivy avoidable, and the hike itself fairly level for the most part. Meet at the rear parking lot of Congregation Mishkan Tefila on the west side of Hammond Pond Parkway, just north of the Chestnut Hill Mall (north side of Rt 9). Do not park anywhere near their buildings, but continue beyond to the isolated lot in the woods in the back. We expect the event to take about two hours. Bring fern questions from the woods or from your garden, and any fern fronds you would like to have identified.



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

TBA (10 am - 12 noon)

Japanese Knotweed Pull at Hammond Pond

Trip leader: Eric Olson (617-872-9928)

Japanese Knotweed is a bamboo-like invader from Asia that can create dense 8'-tall single-species stands. Knotweed is a tough adversary, not because it's spiny or strong or even particularly hard to pull, but like the magic brooms in Disney's "Fantasia" Sorcerer's Apprentice, any small root fragments we leave behind will spring back to life the following year. Government scientists are seeking biological control agents for this species in Asia, but until and unless they find some, we are stuck controlling the plant by hand. Persistence pays with this species, and eradication is possible, but it takes several years to truly finish the job. Bring pitchforks, garden spades, and hand pruners if you have them. Meet at small parking lot off Hammond Pond Parkway adjacent to pond and within view of Macy's.



PHOTO: STEVEN SULEWSKI

MISSION Newton Conservators, Inc.

The Newton Conservators promotes the protection and preservation of natural areas, including parks, playgrounds, forests and streams, which are open or may be converted to open space for the enjoyment and benefit of the people of Newton. It further aims to disseminate information about these and other environmental matters.

A primary goal is to foster the acquisition of land, buildings and other facilities to be used for the encouragement of scientific, educational, recreational, literary and other public pursuits that will promote good citizenship and the general welfare of the people of our community.

The Newton Conservators was formed as a not-for-profit organization 50 years ago in June 1961.

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We welcome material related to our mission from any source. Send proposed articles or letters by email in MS Word or rich text format to bethwilkinson@mac.com. Digitized photographs, maps and diagrams are also welcome.

Editor:	Beth Wilkinson	617-969-4443
Design/Layout	Patricia Robinson	617-964-4488
Production:	Bonnie Carter	617-969-0686

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