

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

Saturday, March 23 (1-3 pm)

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

Trip Leader: Eric Olson (Cell phone on day of outing: 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 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, so 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 there.



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

Sunday, April 21 (2-3:30 pm) (Walk will happen rain or shine)

Finding Newton's Old Waterworks at Cutler Pond

Walk Leader: Lucy Caldwell Stair

Few people walking through the woods in Cutler Pond 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 Pond DCR parking lot on Kendrick Street just across the Charles River in Needham. Walk will happen rain or shine. Please dress for weather and walking.



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

Saturday, April 27 (8:00 am) (Rain date: April 28)

Bird Walk along the Blue Heron walk on the Charles River

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

Join us for birding along the Charles River path, a little stretch of green-space in an otherwise urban landscape. We will be looking for migrating warblers, vireos and thrushes. Yellow warblers, catbirds and northern orioles are found in abundance here. Other possible finds are hawks, kingfishers, herons, and spotted sandpipers. Interests in plants and insects are welcome. Park at the Pleasant Street Super Stop & 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. Meet at path entrance. Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome. Boots/walking shoes are recommended.



PHOTO: RICHARD DANCA

Saturday, May 4 (8:00 am) (Rain date: May 5)

Bird Walk at Cold Spring Park

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, 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.

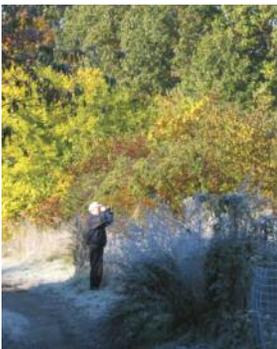


PHOTO: DAN BRODY

Sunday, May 12 (8:00 am) (Walk will be cancelled in steady rain)

Nahanton Park Mother's Day Bird Walk

Trip Leaders: Alison Leary (617-821-5619) & 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, swallows and brown thrashers. 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

Saturday, May 18 (1 pm)
Canoe/Kayak Trip at Nahanton Park

Trip Leader: Bill Hagar (617-964-2644) (Co-sponsored with the Friends of Nahanton Park)

This canoe/kayak trip will start at the Nahanton Park area. This is a beautiful section of the Charles River from which you can go upstream to the far reaches of Needham, Dedham and Wellesley. Interested nature lovers can bring their own canoe or kayak to use or can rent one of them at the new canoe/kayak/water stand rental that is now located at Nahanton Park. The area upstream is a region of significant beauty with almost pristine conditions of local marshes and tree lines. Cutler Marsh is particularly impressive in depth with different patterns of wildlife overlapping the background tree line and marsh views. Dress appropriately. A hat, sunscreen, snacks and drinks are recommended supplies. 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

Sunday, May 19 (2 pm)
Webster Woods Walk

Trip Leader: Octo Burnett (617-969-6988)

Join us for a leisurely walk through the largest conservation area in Newton. Explore miles of trails through second-growth woods with noted rock outcroppings of Roxbury Puddingstone, brooks, ponds, wetlands, overgrown farmland, and an historic woodland garden. Trip highlights include Webster Brook and Webster Vale, one of the few brooks that go to the Charles, where the headwaters can be seen; a great area for marsh marigolds and salamanders; Gooch's Caves, a large rock formation with numerous small caves (climbing in and through the caves is optional); and Bare Pond, one of the few remaining vernal pools in Newton.



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

Saturday, June 8 (1-3 pm) (Rain date is Sunday, June 9)
Fern Walk at Houghton Garden

Trip Leader: Don Lubin (617-254-8464 or http://nefern.info)

Although Houghton Garden is not as wild as some other places in Newton, we can see more than a dozen ferns and maybe a club-moss and horsetail. These account for most of the ferns you are likely to see in any woods. Wear long pants just in case. No climbing necessary. We expect the event to take about two hours. Park on Suffolk Road near Woodman Road. Bring fern questions from the woods or from your garden and any fern fronds you would like to have identified.



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

Sunday, June 2 (2 pm)
Aqueduct Trails Bicycle Ride

Trip Leader: Henry Finch (617-964-4488)

This very popular bike tour follows the 12- to 15-mile Aqueduct Trail through Newton, Needham and Wellesley. While mostly leisurely, it is sometimes strenuous. The tour is for ages 12 and up. Children must be accompanied by an adult, and all riders must wear helmets and use bikes that are able to travel off road. The tour runs through established paths, pinewoods, meadows and hills. You will travel near backyards, and riders should be respectful of the privacy of homeowners. Meet in front of the Starbucks near the Waban MBTA Station.

Newton Conservators' activities for Newton Serves on Sunday, April 28, and other invasive pulls will be listed separately on our website: newtonconservators.org/trips.htm

If you haven't renewed your membership already, now is the time. And consider a gift for a conservation-minded friend.



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Please make checks payable to Newton Conservators, Inc.
Visit our website at www.newtonconservators.org if you wish to renew your membership online.



Ready for Spring!
Photo by Dan Brody