

# WALKS SCHEDULE SPRING 2017

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

## **Sunday, April 9 at 1:00 pm** (Rain or Shine)

### **THE HIDDEN LIFE OF VERNAL POOLS: FOREST AND VERNAL POOL EXPLORATION AT WEBSTER WOODS**

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 these temporary wetlands, where they are not eaten by fish. Join us as we search obligate vernal pool species, including fairy shrimp, spotted salamanders and wood frogs. The amphibians are the stars of the show, but you will also watch for mammal tracks and learn about trees and other forest plants. 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. For anyone not up to a 1-mile hike (round-trip), you can meet up with the group at 2 pm in the back parking lot (far back) of Congregation Mishkan Tefila on Hammond Pond Road; the vernal pool is right there.

*Trip Leader: Eric Olson (Cell phone on day of outing: 617-872-9928)*

## **Sunday, April 16 at 2:00 pm**

### **TAKE A REAL HIKE IN NEWTON: DISCOVER THE NEWTON AQUEDUCTS**

A 5 mile hike through woods, meadows and fields along the Newton sections of the Sudbury and Cochituate aqueducts. 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.

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

## **Saturday, April 22 at 10:30 am** (Cancelled if it is raining at 9:30 am)

### **A WALK AROUND HAMMOND POND AND NEARBY PLANT COMMUNITIES**

Hammond Pond and the surrounding woods contain a surprising variety of plant communities and a wide diversity of plant species. Their distribution and abundance are affected by both past land use and current environmental conditions. In coming decades, climate change will increasingly affect this area. The walk will emphasize the identification and natural history of common tree, shrub, and wildflower species. Evidence of past land use in the woods and current environmental conditions will also be pointed out.

Meet at the Chestnut Hill Shopping Center parking lot at Hammond Pond, closest to the woods. There is an informational kiosk there. The walk will last approximately 90 minutes.

*Trip Leader: Richard Primack, Professor of Plant Ecology, Boston University (Cell phone on day of outing: 857-636-8378, email: primack@bu.edu)*

## **Sunday, April 30 at 10:00 am and again with easier route at 11:30 am**

### **ECHO BRIDGE AND HEMLOCK GORGE WALK**

Explore the geology, trees, plants and history of DCR Hemlock Gorge Reservation, with a focus on National Register listed Echo Bridge and plans to restore its historic railings. The 10 am walk will include stairs and an uphill trail segment; it will also provide great views of the Run of the Charles as paddlers go under the bridge. The 11:30 walk will be easier and will cover most of the same points.

Meet at the corner of Elliot and Chestnut Streets near the mill.

*Trip Leader: Jim Purdy (617-969-3290)*

## Sunday, May 14 at 8:00 am

### NAHANTON PARK MOTHER'S DAY BIRD WALK

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. Mother's Day occurs during the peak of the spring migration, so we will look for a variety of brilliantly colored tropical birds on their way to breeding grounds further north. Also expect newly arrived resident warblers, vireos, tanagers, orioles, swallows, and wrens. Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome. Waterproof walking shoes are recommended. Walk will be cancelled in steady rain. Co-sponsored by the Newton Conservators and the Friends of Nahanton Park.

Meet at the Nahanton Street entrance next to the river. Parking is available inside the park.

*Trip Leaders: Alison Leary (617-821-5619), Haynes Miller (617-413-2419)*

**New Date: Saturday, May 6 at 8:00 am**

Rain Date: May 7

### BIRD WALK AT COLD SPRING PARK

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 such as 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.

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

## Saturday, June 17 from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm (Rain Date: June 18)

### FERNS OF KENNARD PARK

Kennard Park is a fairly large conserved area off Dudley Road that lies between Chestnut Hill and Newton South High School. We will see more than a dozen common ferns and one club-moss. There won't be much climbing involved. Wear long pants, and bring a lens if you have one and any ferns you'd like me to identify.

*Trip Leader: Don Lubin (617-254-8464), <http://nefern.info>, [don@nefern.info](mailto:don@nefern.info)*

PHOTOS PREVIOUS PAGE: LEFT TO RIGHT : ANN KANE, DAN BRODY, HAYNES MILLER, DON LUBIN

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Day Lily  
Photo by Suzette Barbier