

# WALKS SCHEDULE SPRING 2016

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

## Saturday, April 2 at 1:00 pm Rain or shine! (RAIN DATE: APRIL 3)

### 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; the vernal pool is right there.

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

## Saturday, April 9 at 10:00 am (RAIN DATE: APRIL 10)

### WALK AROUND THE WABAN HILL RESERVOIR

Come take a short walk around the Waban Hill Reservoir site, the City's newest open space, purchased this past spring using Community Preservation Act funds. Once a backup reservoir to the state's water supply system, the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) deemed it unnecessary and disconnected it prior to the sale. This 5-acre parcel in Chestnut Hill now falls under the jurisdiction of the Newton Parks and Recreation Department while the Conservators hold its conservation restriction, ensuring it remains a passive park in perpetuity. The reservoir's dam is steep but its water is entirely fenced for public safety and the pedestrian entry on Manet Road is accessible, leading to a level ¼ mile walk on grass. Parking is available on any of the surrounding streets.

**Trip Leaders: Carol Schein, Newton's Open Space Coordinator (617-796-1507)**

## Saturday, April 23 at 12:00 pm

### QUINOBEQUIN RIVER WALK

Join Waban's Henry Finch and storyteller Jerry Reilly for a walk along this portion of the DCR's Upper Charles Reservation. We will look for the scenic and beautiful aspects

of this less well known connector park between Hemlock Gorge and the Leo G. Martin Golf Course. Acquired by the state in the 1890's, this 3/4 mile stretch of the Charles has reflected many historical periods over the past centuries. We will circulate a landscape design plan from the Olmstead firm, generated at the time of the state taking, as well as other historical documents. The walk will follow the volunteer-maintained dirt path that parallels the river and is very flat for the most part. Long pants and shirts advised.

Meet at the DCR parking lot at the Ellis street ramp at 12:00 p.m. (It's a short walk from either the Waban or Elliot T stop as well as from the Aqueducts.)

**Trip Leaders: Jerry Reilly, Henry Finch, and Maureen Reilly Meagher (617-999-5300)**

## Sunday, May 10 at 8:00 am

May 8 is  
correct  
date

### 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. 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. Co-sponsored with Friends of Nahanton Park.

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

## Saturday, May 14 at 8:00 am (RAIN DATE: MAY 15)

### 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)**

**June 5 walk:** meet at the lot just inside the Beacon St entrance, near the tennis courts; call trip leader at 671-969-7614 in case of heavy rain

## Sunday, May 15 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)*

## Sunday, May 22 at 10:30 am

### WEBSTER WOODS WALK

Come and (hopefully) see the beautiful Lady's Slipper orchids. Meet at the end of Warren Street for a 90 minutes walk through the Newton Webster Conservation area, including the Vale and Bare Pond. The tour will be lead by BU Professor of Plant Ecology and life-long Newton resident Richard Primack, who will point out notable trees, shrubs, and wildflowers, and probably salamanders.

*Trip Leader: Prof. Richard Primack (617 332 1684)*

## Sunday Saturday, June 5 from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

### INVASIVE-PLANT WALK: LEARN TO IDENTIFY THEM

What are the invasive plant species found in Newton and what harm do they do to the ecosystem? Newton Native Bruce

PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT : JERRY REILLY, SUZETTE BARBIER (2), DAN BRODY

Wenning is an invasive plant specialist and horticulturist. Join Bruce for a professionally guided walking tour of Cold Spring Park to learn how to identify several types of invasive plants and to learn what you can do in your own yard to safely remove them. Bruce will explain how different invasive plants spread and what removal methods are effective on each. He also will discuss the important topic of how to properly dispose of the plants once removed.

*Trip Leader: Bruce Wenning (617-962-0646)*

## Saturday, June 25 at 11:00 am (RAIN DATE: JUNE 26)

### HOUGHTON GARDEN FERN WALK

This garden remains from the Houghton Estate and is now owned by Newton. It is part of the Webster Conservation Area complex near Hammond Pond that runs from Rt. 9 north beyond the MBTA Riverside line.

The garden, only lightly managed now, retains a variety of flowering plants and a surprising diversity of ferns. We will see more than a dozen fern species and one club-moss.

Park on Suffolk Road (off Hammond St.) and meet near the gate at Woodman Rd.

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

## ADDITIONAL SPRING EVENTS

1. Please donate your time for Newton Serves on **May 1!** See listing in the Invasive-Plant Pulls section in this newsletter for the details.
2. Hear Bryan Connolly, professor at Framingham State University and former State Botanist, talk about invasive plants at the Annual Meeting on Wednesday, **May 11!**
3. Come to the Newton Free Library on **May 31** at 7:00 pm to hear Bruce Wenning talk about invasive plants in Newton!
4. Don't miss the second annual June Doin' at Nahanton Park on Saturday, **June 11**. There will be events for everyone in the family. Check the listing earlier in this newsletter.
5. Check out the summer issue of the newsletter for walks after **June 25!**