

HATS OFF TO REAL CREATIVITY!



Left, sitting behind the geese-discouraging posts are, left to right back row, Cecily Cornish, Lyn Taylor, Phyllis Vineyard and employee of Town of Newton, Alice Boardman, Susan Lawrence, Catherine Hill, Abby Coffin. Front row, Pam Koenig, Louisa Smith, Newton Conservation Department employee and Marjorie Greville. Below, GHGC planting in prepared bioretention area. Below, GHGC planting in prepared bioretention area. Photos by Alice Boardman.



Chestnut Hill helps clean up drainage into Hammond Pond

Hammond Pond in Chestnut Hill, MA, occupies 22 acres with a maximum depth of six feet and average depth of four feet and is sited between dense development and open woodlands, including Metropolitan District Commission land, Chestnut Hill Shopping Center and Route 9.

Hammond Pond suffered from an accelerated rate of filling in (eutrofication), plant infestation, poor water quality, and an overpopulation of Canada geese. Runoff from Route 9 storm drains and the shopping center mall roof and parking lots deposited fecal matter, sand, organic debris, trash, and petroleum products into the Pond.

The Hammond Pond Project was to clean runoff before it entered the pond, utilizing sand filters, bioretention areas, planting, fencing and an educational component. The Chestnut Hill GC took on the task of designing vegetative buffers, purchasing plant material, and planting the bioretention area and vegetative buffers.

Bioretention areas are soil filters over special loamy soil covering an underground pipe system that discharges filtered water to the pond. Vegetative buffers increase the shoreline's filtering capacity, prevent erosion, and discourage the

geese, an especially difficult problem. One solution has been to cut back the size of grassy areas and plant trees and shrubs which deter the geese's natural pathway. Fescue grasses are less tasty to geese than Kentucky blue grass.

CHGC's Margie Greville designed two buffers of native plants that tolerate standing water and offer habitat or food for a variety of

insects and birds. These buffers create a richer shoreline community than grass, do not need mowing and will discourage the geese. Once the planting plan was designed, the bioretention area and vegetative buffer areas prepared and the plants ordered, over 20 CHGC volunteers planted 250 plants and installed 500 three-foot metal garden stakes every 18 inches to prevent the Canada geese from landing in the new gardens and eating the young plants. Once the shrubs and grasses have matured, the stakes will be removed. Two more buffers were planted later.

Plant List

Perennials

- Aster novae-anglae* (New England aster)
- Coreopsis lanceolata*
- Eupatorium maculatum* (Joe Pye weed)
- Rudbeckia fulgida* (Brilliant Coneflower)
- Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *speciosa* (Black-eyed Susan)

- Solidago rugosa* (Rough-stemmed goldenrod)

Grasses

- Elymus canadensis* (Canada wild rye)
- E. virginicus* (Virginia wild rye)
- Glyceria canadensis* (Canada mannagrass)
- Panicum virgatum* (Switchgrass)

Shrubs

- Clethra alnifolia* (Summersweet)
- Cornus sericea* (Red twig dogwood)
- Ilex verticillata* (Winterberry)

Locating species was difficult in October and there were some substitutions.

Abby Coffin,
Chestnut Hill GC (MA), Zone 1