



**NEWTON  
CONSERVATORS**

AUTUMN ISSUE

# NEWSLETTER

*Newton's land trust working to preserve open space since 1961*

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## Trees and Wires: Bad Mix



A tree pruning crew from Nstar, one of the utilities that own the telephone and electric wires in our streets, came to Auburndale in early August to clear branches. Neighbors protested the extent of the tree cutting. Newton Conservators' Board Member AnnaMaria Abernathy produced a document from City officials that stopped the work. "Nowhere has there been anything like this before," said Abernathy. "It's fast and cheap, and it does a job on the trees." In some cases, tree canopies were reduced by half. Neighbors' protests were successful in bringing a temporary halt to the pruning. Newton's local newspaper covered the skirmish. Newton Conservator President Jane Sender sent an open letter calling for more minimal pruning. Katherine Howard of the Conservators' Board and Chair of the Newton Urban Tree Commission sent a second open letter. Both are reprinted in this issue.

This small skirmish may be part of a growing clash, due to a simple fact: trees and wires have difficulty occupying the same space. Trees are an important part of the urban forest in a city like Newton, which has relatively little open space. Says Howard, "Trees provide shade and beauty. We enjoy their green, cool shade." The wires provide the power and the communications for the city's businesses and homes. Both are important. And they fight for the same air space.

**Before the Wires** – Before telephone poles, trees had the canopy to themselves. The major roads of Newton were lined with elms and chestnuts that over-arched the street, the way the big oaks do today on the Route 1 parkway in West Roxbury. When telephone and electricity came along, the



nation wanted to "electrify." In dense urban neighborhoods, along the scenic parkways that were developed in the 1930s, and in commercial centers like Newton's villages, the wires were buried, or "undergrounded." Elsewhere, for a nation spread out over a big landscape, it made more sense to pursue a low-cost approach like overhead wires. We allowed the utilities to install the poles and wires that dominate our streets, originally with one single strand for telephone and one for electricity.

Then came the cable revolution. Utilities used the same small poles to carry heavier cable lines. Two strands multiplied into a dozen, some of them inches thick. Poles bent under the weight. Instead of replacing poles, the utilities "sistered" new, taller poles up to the old poles and carved large swaths

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### *Trees & Wires continued from page 1:*

through the old tree canopy. An array of bent and staggering poles now carries wires through mangled trees. That, as well as our monthly bills, is the cost for the Internet and for the much-improved pictures for our tvs.

With all that, still, storms blow in. Falling trees take down wires, and neighborhoods lose power for days.

**Solutions** – In 2005, Newton established the Newton Task Force on Undergrounding Utilities to study the possibility of burying the wires. Undergrounding is an optimum solution, as it eliminates the possibility of downed wires. However, undergrounding is expensive. The utilities claim a cost of \$1 million per mile, or \$190 per running foot. (For reference, the cost of a new road, with paving and utilities, is quoted by local road builders at about \$400 per running foot.) To underground any significant portion of the road network would cut into the profits of the utilities. To date, lawmakers and regulators have been unwilling to do that.

Another avenue is to require more minimal pruning. Utilities in other communities prune a much narrower margin around their wires, leaving the trees in healthier condition. This is the request the Conservators have made in President Sender's open letter.

A third is to ask that the utilities be made subject to the Newton Tree Ordinance. The Ordinance, passed in 1999, calls for replacement of trees that are removed. The utilities' heavy pruning, which eventually results in the death of many street trees, may be considered, in effect, a removal of trees. For the utilities, compliance with the Ordinance would be a relatively low-cost solution. Removal of the trees that have the misfortune to be located beneath the wires and planting of replacements at more practical locations would remove the threat to the wires and give the city back its trees.

The solution may be a combination of these efforts. Undergrounding may be the best solution on main roads like Walnut Street, Route 9, and Washington Street, where trees that take out main trunk lines in a storm can knock out power to large parts of the community. Minimal pruning and tree replacement under the Tree Ordinance may be better solutions on side streets.

Cities and towns have no funding for expensive initiatives like burying wires underground. The utilities are for-profit companies. To date, they have been successful in preventing the imposition of costs for undergrounding, tree replacement, or other measures that would reduce their profits. Regulations are on the books that prohibit the kind of

low-cost construction that produces double poles and poles that list at an angle. But the fines for these practices are so light that cities and towns in effect are powerless to put the practices to a stop. To date, the power has belonged to the power company.

But the Conservators have raised an issue. If the Conservators are successful, it may result in a new balance in the conflict between the wires and the trees.

✂ Eric Reenstierna



## Letters

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### Use "More Thought and Care"

*(This open letter was sent to The Newton Tab.)*

#### **To the Editors:**

As many people know, contractors for NStar began pruning trees to clear power lines August 7. We are very grateful to City of Newton Tree Warden Marc Welch and Parks & Recreation Commissioner Bob DeRubeis for moving very quickly to stop the pruning once it was clear that branches were being removed in excess of the guidelines previously established.

Although Marc Welch and the Tree Conservancy work extremely hard to plant and maintain the City's trees, Newton loses far more trees every year than can be replaced.

We ask that NStar, as it resumes its work, remember this, and

- (1) prune carefully, only as much as necessary, and
- (2) provide written notice in each neighborhood, of the work and the guidelines being followed.

We are aware that power outages and other issues which come up when branches are too close to electrical lines are costly and disruptive; however, more thought and care needs to be put into the process of cutting branches to ensure that the goal of minimizing disruption is balanced against the need for Newton to maintain a healthy urban forest.

Jane E. Sender  
President  
Newton Conservators, Inc

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*Letters continued from page 2:*

## Spare the Trees!

*(This open letter was sent to The Newton Tab. Katherine Howard is a Director and Treasurer of The Newton Conservators.)*

The recent NSTAR tree pruning in Auburndale was shocking and calls for an improved process. Surrounding communities are dealing with the same issues, which are quite complex:

- Ever-increasing demand for cable, phone, and electricity means more and bigger wires, and need for line clearance. The electric utility has special powers to prune for public safety.
- More, bigger, heavier wires require /taller utility poles – and pruning 12 feet higher.
- The 2' 9" diameter circle around the high power lines is electrified and branches are a fire and safety hazard.
- NSTAR's "standard" is to clear 12 feet above, 8 feet each side, and 8 feet below the electric lines. A branch growing into this zone may be removed to the trunk (for a proper arborist cut). The huge size of this empty zone, reducing NSTAR's costs by extending the pruning cycle, seems excessive (arboriculture standards don't remove more than 25% of a tree's canopy).
- The "right tree for the right spot" principle was not followed in the past, adding to this problem. Newton loses 400-500 public trees per year, and has very limited funds to plant replacements, far less than our surrounding communities. We need to plant large shade trees where we can, and small trees where there are overhead wires. To plant any trees at all, we need public and private support.
- Newton's trees add to the city's property values, beauty, and health of its residents. This priceless asset must be promoted and passed along to future generations. NSTAR must not decimate our urban forest.

The Tree Commission will assist the City's Forestry Department to improve the process, review power outage data, pruning guidelines, notification processes for City and private trees, and standards for the work itself to ensure that good pruning decisions are made.

*Katherine Howard*

*Chair, Newton Urban Tree Commission*

## President's Message: The Next Fifty Years

**50** The Newton Conservators turn fifty in 2011. Like all baby boomers, we seek at midlife a reinvigorated, practical and realistic sense of how we can best use the years of accumulated wisdom, experience, and accomplishments to do even better, furthering our mission of preserving and protecting Newton's open spaces.

My view is that Newton's parks and conservation areas need our stewardship. Paying close attention to what is happening in our open spaces, educating people about them, and working with partners to solve problems is vitally important. My view also is that we need a renewed focus on protecting some of the land listed on the City's open space plan and on shaping current development projects.

We are active in stewardship and in education and awareness efforts. Among our recent efforts are these:

- working with Marc Welch, the City's Tree Warden, we succeeded in temporarily halting NStar's tree pruning so that a more thoughtful approach could be adopted;
- we spearheaded the establishment of a Parks & Recreation Commission Working Group to carefully study current uses and proposed changes at Nahanton Park;
- we are revising our very popular trail guide, providing up to date maps and information;
- we are implementing the recommendations contained in the monitoring reports done by the Massachusetts Audubon Extension Service to keep our properties well managed;
- we are producing a Public Service announcement with NewTV;
- we printed a Second Edition of our highly acclaimed Newton Conservators' Almanac;
- we are updating and creating other communications, including a new promotional card, an updated look for our newsletters, and a new brochure;
- we continue our popular fall and spring walks and events;
- we continue our invasives removal efforts.

These are really solid efforts, and we can build on them in years to come. There is, however, more to be done to focus our efforts on protecting land and on monitoring development projects. We are already planning a new and different Annual Meeting for next year, focusing on our leadership role in preserving additional open space,



### President's Message continued from page 3:

celebrating the accomplishments of the last fifty years, and fundraising to support our activities.

We are the only group in Newton dedicated to these efforts. The next fifty years are sure to bring huge and different challenges. We are very proud of what the Conservators have done in the last fifty years, and we hope we can do it again. We also hope you will see that our efforts are important, support us with donations, and join us, often, in our work as well as on our walks and activities.

— Jane Sender

## Five Native Plants to Add This Fall

Fall is an excellent time to introduce new plants to your garden. Bringing in native plants to replace non-natives will make your yard more “nature-friendly” as habitat and as a food source for the wildlife found here. These five plants are especially good choices for our Newton yards.

**Red Oak** - If you need to add a new high-canopy tree to your property, you can't go wrong with a red oak (*Quercus rubra*). Red oaks are available at many garden centers, they are easier to transplant than most other oaks, and they grow quickly. Red oaks will provide dappled shade, allowing you to have a garden with shade-loving plants



— Beth Schroeder

underneath, unlike maple trees that produce too much shade. Red oaks provide food for chipmunks, squirrels, blue jays and other wildlife. Red oaks can be centered on the front lawn of your property as a shade tree or planted along your lot line. You may want to plant them within your property rather than on the lot line if your neighbor is an overachieving pruner. Otherwise you may end up with a tree that looks like a telephone pole rather than a tree.

**American Hornbeam** - If you would like to add an understory tree, the American hornbeam (*Carpinus carolinianus*) would be an excellent choice. These trees are happy to grow under your new red oak or other existing high-canopy trees. American hornbeams are excellent for a smaller property because they are small-scaled, slow-growing trees that get to be 15 to 20 feet high and 12 to 18 feet wide. The American hornbeam does not flower, but it has lovely green lanterns made up of fruit clusters that



— Duke.edu

dangle from its branches in the fall. Its vibrant fall foliage turns from yellow to orange, scarlet and maroon. In the winter, its sinewy gray bark and attractive horizontal layered branches add beauty to your garden. I would recommend planting the American hornbeam within the boundaries of your property, putting it six to nine feet from your property line. This tree is a good choice to give a punctuation mark to shrub beds. Or, plant it in a small front yard as a specimen tree.

**Shadbush** - A favorite large shrub of mine is the shadbush (*Amelanchier canadensis*). It is called “shadbush” because it blooms when the shad, or alewife, are running in the Charles River. This shrub gets to be about ten to 20 feet high and five to ten feet wide. It has very early spring flowers, in bunches of pure white blossoms. After the flowers fade it produces bright red berries, which are a choice food of the American robin, eastern phoebe, catbird, mockingbird, and downy woodpecker. In the fall its leaves turn many shades from gold to red. When planted on the corner of your house or in front in a blank section of your home's exterior wall, this shrub can spread its branches to cover a bit of your windows. Plant it at least three to five feet away from your house, so that it has room to grow. It would also be a fine addition to a lot line or shrub border.



— Beth Schroeder

**Pagoda Dogwood** - Among larger shrubs, another favorite of mine is the pagoda dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*). This shrub is sometimes called alternate-leaf dogwood because it is the only dogwood that has leaves growing alternately on its branches instead of opposite. This makes it easy to recognize in the wild. It grows to be about ten to 20 feet high and about six to 15 feet wide. It is called “pagoda dogwood” because its layered branching patterns resemble an Asian pagoda. It has white flowers in the spring. Along with most native shrubs, it has lovely fall coloring, its leaves turning a soft pale yellow. Pagoda dogwood does best in



— Beth Schroeder

### Five Native Plants continued from page 4:

the shade cast by high-canopy trees. It is also a wonderful plant to put on the shady side of your house or along your property line for privacy. Give it about six feet of free space so that it will not be crowded.

**Oakleaf Hydrangea** - Oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*) is a full, round, medium-sized shrub that can add great beauty to your garden. It grows to be three to 10 feet tall and four to 12 feet wide. The spring flowers are large and cone-shaped: they begin as white blossoms and gradually change to purple.

Oakleaf hydrangea has very large leaves shaped much like giant oak leaves. In the fall these leaves turn into a kaleidoscope of colors including reds, oranges, pinks and purples. These brilliantly colored leaves persist into early winter. Plant oakleaf hydrangea in sun or partial shade. It can be used as an understory planting in a woodland garden, in a shrub border, or as a foundation planting near your house.



— Beth Schroeder

As you can see, many of our native shrubs will grow in partial shade and often prefer to grow under high-canopy trees. This is the condition that often presents itself in the New England woodlands and in our suburban gardens. Native plants provide three to four seasons of interest rather than just a bit of spring color. They outshine many non-natives with their brilliant fall colors. These five plants are readily available for purchase in local garden centers. If you place them correctly you should not need to prune them. To learn more about native plants you can read the *Newton Conservators Almanac*, which pictures and describes native plants found in our local conservation areas.

— Beth Schroeder  
Schroeder Design · bsw1@comcast.net

## Return of the Native

During a walk along the Sudbury Aqueduct at this time of the year, you may encounter a group of wild turkeys. It will most likely consist of a hen with her half-dozen offspring, hatched earlier in the spring. They will be feeding on open ground, searching under trees and shrubs for acorns and seeds. Insects are included in their diet, and they may actually seem to be working cooperatively in the capture of grasshoppers. They will wander considerable distances in the open in search of food, but at any moment, in the face of danger, they can fly quickly to the security of branches high in nearby trees.

Although a few turkeys breed here in Newton each year, in most respects turkeys remain birds of the forest. They nest on the ground in a wooded area under protection of dense cover, and they roost and sleep in the upper branches of large trees. In the past they existed in large numbers throughout North America, serving as an important food source for Native Americans and later settlers. By the end of the 19th century most of the land in Massachusetts had been cleared for farming and its forests harvested for timber. As a consequence, wild turkeys disappeared entirely. The last few were seen in 1850 on Mount Tom just west of the Connecticut Valley. Other states in the East were similarly affected. In 1855 the *American Sportsman* gave this sad report on the status of turkeys: "In former times they wandered in vast armies from one end of our country to the other; but even in this day scarcely one is to be found on the whole Northern Atlantic sea-coast."



— M.G. Criscitiello

Starting in the early 1900s, efforts were made to restore turkeys in Massachusetts. At first, birds raised in game farms were used, but those failed to adapt to living in the wild. Although some states had achieved success in introducing wild birds, turkeys were still entirely absent from Massachusetts as recently as fifty years ago. In 1972 and 1973 the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) received permission to trap 37 wild turkeys in New York State. These were released in southern areas of Berkshire County, and within a few years it was evident that they had adapted successfully and were reproducing well. By 1978 the turkey count had risen to over a thousand birds, and many of their offspring were introduced to other areas of the state.

Some of these birds have moved from deep forests to suburban areas, and in the suburbs there have been increasing encounters with people. Turkeys may wander onto downtown sidewalks or interrupt automobile traffic. Turkeys may venture into backyards where birdseed from feeders is let fall to the ground. In some instances,



### *Return of the Native continued from page 5:*

particularly with males during breeding season, there has been aggressive posturing toward humans during encounters in gardens and yards. These birds will usually retreat if you make loud noises or send spray with a water hose. (MassWildlife's Web site offers advice about prevention of such encounters, with emphasis on keeping the ground under your feeders free of birdseed.)

Despite their occasional intrusions on city streets or in people's gardens, it seems only fair to welcome back these denizens of the forest and to share our parks and open spaces with them.

✍ M. G. Criscitiello

## League of Women Voters Hosts Storm Water Forum



Sewage-filled basements, ducks swimming through back yards, water rushing up from storm drains and sewers.... Was the situation in Newton following the heavy rains of March accidental? Why were so many newly affected? Will such floods return?

Parts of Newton are built on wetlands; streams that used to flow freely are now piped underground or contained in concrete ditches; open areas that used to absorb water are now built or paved over. What else lies underground? What does it cost us to leave hundred-year-old brick sewers to crumble? What happens if we repair the pipes, so water stops flowing into our sewer lines? How have these issues, and others, created the conditions for the floods of March?

"We need to understand whether floods are inevitable, and, if so, what the city and residents can do," said Gail Glick, spokeswoman for the League of Women Voters of Newton (LWVN). "The condition of our infrastructure is critical to mitigating property damage and pollution."

On September 21, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. at the Druker Auditorium at the Newton Free Library, a panel of experts will explain why Newton flooded in March and how the river system, the drains and sewers work. The forum, *The Floods Last Time – In Over Our Heads?* is the first of two on storm water management, presented by the League of Women Voters of Newton.

Panelists are *Bob Zimmerman*, *Tom Daley*, and *Fred Abernathy*. Mr. Zimmerman is Executive Director of the Charles River Watershed Association. Mr. Daley is Commissioner of Public Works for the City of Newton. Mr. Abernathy is the Gordon McKay Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Abbott and James Lawrence Research Professor of Engineering, as well as the Director of the 1999 Harvard Engineering students' study on Newton Sewer System Inflow & Infiltration. The Moderator is *Priscilla Leith*, Chair of the LWVN Water Subcommittee.

The second forum, *The Floods Next Time – Do We Need an Ark?*, will be held on October 26, 2010, at 7:00 pm, also at Druker Auditorium. Co-sponsors with LWVN are the Green Decade Coalition, Newton History Museum, Newton Conservators and the Newton Free Library.

## Hemlock Gorge Fall Cleanup

The Friends of Hemlock Gorge have scheduled their fall cleanup for Saturday, October 23, at 9:30. Hemlock Volunteers should meet at Hamilton Place. Parking is available at Hamilton Place, at the Mills Falls parking lot, and at the Hemlock Gorge parking lot at the intersection of Ellis St. and Rte. 9. Spruce-up materials will be supplied. Refreshments will be provided for all volunteers! Please dress appropriately for the work and weather (rain or shine). **For more information, call Brian Yates at 617-244-2601 or visit the Friends Web site at [www.hemlockgorge.org](http://www.hemlockgorge.org).**

✍ Brian Yates

## Crystal Lake Conservancy, Conservators Co-Sponsor Open Forum



The Crystal Lake Conservancy is engaged in a yearlong environmental study of Crystal Lake. The public is invited to learn more about the health of Crystal Lake, the impact of activities within its watershed and the key issue of storm-water management at the Crystal Lake Conservancy's Annual Forum on October 6, 2010, at the Newton Library's Druker Auditorium from 7-9 p.m. This event is Co-sponsored with Newton Conservators.

Speakers will be Larry Beals of Beals Associates and Frederick Civian, Storm Water Coordinator for the MassDEP.

## Crystal Lake Conservancy continued from page 6:



Larry Beals

Mr. Beals is the key consultant on the Crystal Lake Conservancy's Environmental Study. Crystal Lake has been experiencing declining water quality for many years. For the first time, a program was set up with the Crystal Lake Conservancy to systematically monitor water quality throughout the spring, summer, and fall in an effort to gather empirical data. The monitoring

program began last fall and will continue into 2011. To understand the data in context, Mr. Beals will provide an overview of the Crystal Lake limnology and how the lake functions between "ice out" in the spring and when it freezes over again. With that understanding of the lake's dynamic system, he will examine the data that was collected and draw conclusions regarding the current water quality of the lake. He also will discuss the watershed surrounding the lake and its impact on water quality. This initial lake study and watershed evaluation is the first step in a long-term effort to protect and improve the water quality. He will conclude with a look at what can be done in the future to achieve this goal.

Mr. Civian's topic will be "The Fuss About Storm Water: What Is the Problem With Storm Water and What Can Be Done About It?" He will describe how storm water has become a polluting problem and what current and future actions federal, state and local agencies are taking and considering. Topics will include "point sources" and "nonpoint sources" of pollution; the role of impervious

surfaces; total maximum daily loads; and practical regional, local, and household solutions. The presentation will provide the environmental and policy contexts for potential improvements to Crystal Lake.

Mr. Beals is President of Beals Associates, Inc., an environmental consulting firm with offices in Massachusetts and New Hampshire providing professional service in land planning, civil engineering, landscape architecture, and land surveying. He has over thirty years of professional experience with a variety of conservation projects. Mr. Civian has served Massachusetts by developing a number of environmental programs, including rules for Small Quantity Generators, the vehicle emission inspection program, the transportation-related requirements of the Big Dig, and the Board of Registration of Licensed Site Professionals.

Find additional information about the Crystal Lake Conservancy and its programs at [www.crystallakeconservancy.org](http://www.crystallakeconservancy.org).

✍ Janice Bourque



A committed group of Conservators (Eric Olson, Katherine and Irene Howard shown here) returned to the Blue Heron Bridge site in June. Although there was still quite a bit to remove in new places, previous efforts at Garlic Mustard removal have been successful, and native plants are thriving in those areas.

### 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 49 years ago in June 1961.*

**The Newton Conservators Newsletter®** is published four times each year by the Newton Conservators, Inc., in June, September, December, and April. Deadlines for these issues are the first Friday of each month in which an issue is scheduled to be published.

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 [ericreen@tiac.net](mailto:ericreen@tiac.net). Digitized photographs, maps and diagrams are also welcome.

Editor:	Eric Reenstierna	617-530-0764
Design/LO	Patricia Robinson	617-964-4488
Production:	Bonnie Carter	617-969-0686

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



Celebrating 49 years  
of open space advocacy  
in Newton

NEWTON CONSERVATORS  
PO Box 590011  
NEWTON CENTRE  
MA 02459

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

YES! Please renew my tax-deductible membership at the level checked below:

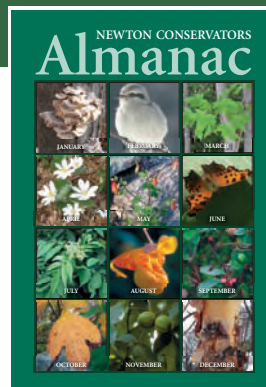
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Please make checks payable to Newton Conservators, Inc.  
Visit our website at [www.newtonconservators.org](http://www.newtonconservators.org) if you wish to renew your membership online.



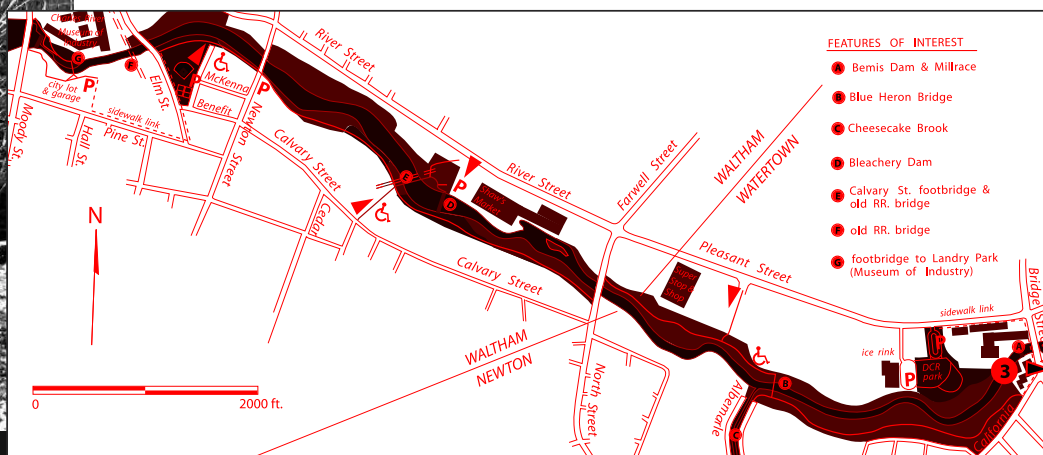
Spend 12 months getting to know Newton's flora and fauna with the *Newton Conservators Almanac*!  
☐ Please send the *Almanac* for \$19.95 plus \$2.50 for postage.



## Coming Soon!

Second Edition of *Walking Trails In Newton's Parks & Conservation Lands*.  
Updated map guide with seven new park/conservation land maps.

Below is an example of a new map by Judy Hepburn,  
and one of 34 park entries found in the updated Trail Guide.  
Map 4 – Charles River Path (Blue Heron Bridge & Cheesecake Brook)





# What are you doing next year?

Spend 12 months getting to know Newton's parks with the Newton Conservators Almanac!



The Almanac is organized by month with "quick-to-locate" seasonal color bands.

Each entry displays the common name, scientific name and a group graphic with description and local field notes.



Native representatives of conifers and deciduous trees, shrubs, wildflowers, ferns, butterflies and birds are some of the monthly entries you will find in this book.

Beautiful color photographs of some of the flora and fauna you are likely to find in Newton

## Order your copy today!



The Newton Conservators  
PO Box 590011  
Newton Centre, MA 02459

☐ Yes, please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the Newton Conservators Almanac. Enclosed is my check for \$19.95 plus \$2.50 for postage for each copy. Please make checks payable to Newton Conservators.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Newton Conservators Almanac, PO Box 590011, Newton Centre, MA 02459



# WALKS SCHEDULE

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

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PHOTO: DAN BRODY

**Sunday, September 19 — 10:00am**

## **Canoe Trip at Nahanton Park with Bill Hagar**

Co-sponsored with Friends of Nahanton Park

Trip leader: Bill Hagar (617-964-2644)

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. Almost all the shoreline is forest or marsh, and much of it is protected parkland. If you have your own canoe or kayak you can put it in the water from this parking lot. Snacks are recommended to bring along. Dress appropriately. A hat, sunscreen, and drinks are recommended to bring along. 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, September 26 — 10:30am**

## **The Natural Communities of Nahanton Park**

Co-sponsored with Friends of Nahanton Park

Trip leader: Jon Regosin (617-244-0736)

From open fields and brushlands to floodplain forest and vernal pools, Nahanton Park provides a diversity of habitats for plants and animals. During this walk, we will explore the plant communities of Nahanton Park and discuss the habitat values of each plant community. We will meet at the lower end of the parking lot off Winchester Street. We may go off trail and run at least some risk of getting our feet wet, so please dress appropriately.

Heavy rain will cancel the walk. To check on status, call trip leader.



PHOTO: RICHARD DANCA

**Sunday, October 3 — 8:00am**

## **Bird Walk at Nahanton Park**

Co-sponsored with Friends of Nahanton Park

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

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 fall migrants as well as resident species. Meet 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: DAN BRODY



PHOTO: RICHARD DANCA



PHOTO: HENRY FINCH



PHOTO: DAN BRODY

**Sunday, October 3 — 3:00pm**

### **Webster Woods Walk**

**Trip Leader: Octo Barnett (617-969-6988)**

Webster Conservation Area is a jewel of open space in Newton. There are over five miles of well worn paths throughout this urban forest. This area was once an open field used for raising sheep and farming. (You can still find the remnants of stone walls.) You and your children can enjoy both the acres of woodland and rock formations of many types – including caves and Cake Rock, a formation of rock of over 15 feet high used for practicing rock climbing. You can also visit Bare Pond – a vernal pond which in the spring has tadpoles and salamanders but is now dry.

In 1862, the *Atlantic Monthly* published an essay entitled “Walking,” written by Henry David Thoreau. The first few sentences of this essay could be used as an introduction to join this walk. “I wish to speak a word for Nature, for absolute freedom and wildness, as contrasted with a freedom and culture merely civil – to regard man as an inhabitant, or a part and parcel of Nature, rather than a member of society.... I have met with but one or two persons in the course of my life who understood the art of walking, that is, of taking walks – who had a genius, so to speak, for sauntering”.

Join us in practicing Thoreau’s art of such sauntering. Park and meet at the end of Warren Street. (Warren Street is off Glen Ave. in Newton Centre. Glen Avenue is off Beacon Street.)

**Sunday, October 10 — 8:00am**

### **Bird Walk at Nahanton Park**

**Co-Sponsored with Friends of Nahanton Park**

**Trip Leaders: Alison Leary (617-821-5619) and Haynes Miller**

See above description of Nahanton Park bird walk. This is a follow-up to the previous week’s walk. Meet 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.

**Sunday, October 24 — 2:00pm**

### **Aqueducts Bike Ride**

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

This very popular bike tour follows the 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.

**Sunday, November 14 — 2:00pm**

### **Aqueducts Hike**

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

This is a very popular four-to-six-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.





**NEWTON  
CONSERVATORS**

AUTUMN ISSUE

# NEWSLETTER

*Newton's land trust working to preserve open space since 1961*

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*Jane Sender*



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