



Newton Conservators E-Bulletin

Friday, May 7, 2010

... working to preserve open space in Newton since 1961

MAY DAYS

May has come at last - the time of year when the almost instant transformation of earth from brown to green takes place. This is an exciting time for gardeners where trees, flowers, bushes, and shrubs burst forth. For birders, every day brings new returning or visiting migrant species and the forest and fields are filled with the sweet sounds of songbirds proclaiming territory and looking for mates. The Newton Conservators have a full program of spring activities including hikes, bird walks, bike rides, and invasive plant removal sessions. We hope that you can join in and participate! The Newton Conservators Annual Dinner Meeting is coming up on May 26th where new Mayor Setti Warren is the featured speaker. See details on this and many other events in the information below.

The latest edition of the Newton Conservators printed newsletter can now be found online at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/apr10.pdf>. The Newton Conservators Spring Walks/Activities Series for 2010 is also available online at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/walks.htm> and a PDF copy can be downloaded at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/events/walkspring10.pdf>. Did you know that you can register and pay for membership, events (like the annual Dinner Meeting), buy a copy of our Almanac, or make a donation to the Newton Conservators online? Just visit the following link to get to our registration page:
<https://s08.123signup.com/servlet/SignUp?PG=1532278182400&P=1532278133476107150857400&Info=>

SPRING EVENTS

Saturday May 8th at 2pm Exploring Vernal Pools at Webster Woods

Please join us to explore the vernal pools in Webster Woods. Vernal pools are small ponds that lack fish and provide important breeding habitat for many amphibians. They support a great diversity of insects and other invertebrates. We will visit at least two vernal pools, dipnet for invertebrates, and discuss vernal pool ecology. Meet at the end of Warren Street where there is parking for 5-8 cars. Additional street parking is available. Warren Street intersects with Langley Road near Newton Centre. If you have calf boots or a dipnet feel free to bring these, but no special gear is needed. This walk will be led by Jon Regosin, Newton Resident, and biologist with the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program of the MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. For questions, contact Jon at 617-244-0736 or berkowitz.regosin@verizon.net. Because there is a limited capacity for this event, we recommend advanced registration. Visit the following link to register for this event (no charge): <https://s08.123signup.com/servlet/SignUp?PG=1532278182400&P=1532278133476107150857400>. For some images of Newton Vernal Pools, see <http://naturalnewton.blogspot.com/2009/04/vernal-pool-certification.html>,

<http://naturalnewton.blogspot.com/2009/04/peepers-mating.html>,
<http://naturalnewton.blogspot.com/2008/04/getting-our-feet-wet.html>,
<http://naturalnewton.blogspot.com/2008/03/great-night-for-spotted-salamanders.html>.

Saturday, May 8 9am-4 pm
Newton Pride Garden Market
On the lawn at Newton City Hall

Come experience the joy of gardening at the Newton Garden Market -- just in time for Mother's Day! There will be thousands of plants to choose from plus suggestions, information and tips from experienced gardeners! This event is organized by the Newton Civic Pride Committee. Green Decade will be there with, along with the Newton Tree Conservancy and others. For more information: 617-527-8283 or www.newtoncivicpride.org.

Saturday, May 8. 9 am - 4 pm
First Annual Garden City Preservation Society Flea Market

There will be a yard sale this Sat. May 8th at the Union St Train Station in Newton Centre! All proceeds will be used to add to the plantings and landscaping around the station. Homegoods, kitchen-ware, artwork, books, clothes, jewelry, purses, scarves, hats, garden-ware, flower bulbs, bric-a-brac, baked goods, picture frames, surprises and treasures galore. Or if you have things to donate, clean out your attics, garages, basements, closets, playrooms, kitchens, etc and bring your "treasures" to the train station either Friday the 7th 2pm-4:30 or Sat. beginning at 7am. Someone will likely want what you want to get rid of! This is sponsored by the Garden City Preservation Society whose mission is to beautify and preserve the gardens of Newton Centre. For more info or to help, please contact gpcs.volunteers@gmail.com.

Sunday May 9 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. Likely finds include brightly colored warblers, vireos, and orioles. Also expect bluebirds, scarlet tanagers, swallows and brown thrashers. 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. Trip Leader is Alison Leary (617-821-5619).

Sunday, May 9, 10 am
Garlic Mustard Pull at Cold Spring Park

Garlic Mustard, a native of Europe that probably came here as a garden herb, has now invaded our backyards, parks, forests and conservation areas. It is high up on the federal/state official list of plant invaders threatening our environment. It will quickly cover vast areas, and low light forested areas, shading out other plants, chemically altering the soil to inhibit germination of competitor seeds, and altering the habitat for native insects such as butterflies. But in areas where it is just starting to invade, it only takes a small amount of effort to be rid of it. It is a biennial very easily identified and pulled when the second year plants are flowering in May/June. If not pulled, each plant will scatter hundreds to thousands of seeds later in the season that will become first year plants

the next year, and also remain as viable seeds for several more years. It is easy and fun to get it out! Cold Spring Park is one area becoming infested. This will follow up our April pull at this location. In case of poison ivy wear long pants and garden gloves. Biodegradable trash bags will be provided; the plants must be disposed of as trash, not as yard waste. Meet at the Duncklee Road entrance, at the Newton Highlands side of the park. Trip leader is Katherine Howard (617-527-1796).

Monday, May 10, 6 pm
Bike Newton's Weekly "No Rider Left Behind" Family Friendly Rides Around Newton Ride to Auburndale Cove

Bike Newton sponsors weekly rides on Mondays at 6 pm. Meet at the Newton Library on Homer Steet. The leader is Nathan Aranow (Nathan.aranow@verizon.net, 617-969-6227). Check out <http://www.bikenewton.org/Bikenewton.org/Rides.html> for the current ride schedule. Other rides will be on May 17 (to Newton Community Farm), May 24 (Russo's), May 31 (Echo Bridge), June 7 (Cordingly Dam), and June 14, 21, 28 (with destination to be announced).

Friday, May 14, 6 - 7:30 pm
Wildflower Walk with Cornelia Warren
UMASS Center Waltham, 240 Beaver Street

Join in this Waltham Land Trust organized walk, led by "Cornelia Warren" (also known as WLT board member Lesya Struz). It will take place at the height of the spring wildflower season, when the woods and fields of Cedar Hill will be ablaze with trillium and other wildflowers. The walk will start at UMASS Center and then walk across the street to Cedar Hill. Find further info at www.walthamlandtrust.org.

Saturday, May 15, 12-4 pm
Newton Community Farm "Biggest Seedling Sale Ever"
Newton Community Farm, 303 Nahanton Street, Newton

Over 10,000 vegetable and herb seedlings will be available at this Seedling Sale. The farm sprouts and grows the seedlings on-site at their greenhouse, and they're ready for transplant to your garden. Heirloom tomatoes, hot and bell peppers, basil, cucumbers, lettuce, and more! For more info or to see the full list visit newtoncommunityfarm.org/events. Bring your own boxes for carrying. Cash or check only.

Sunday, May 16, 8 am
Flowed Meadow Bird Walk

We will walk along the river and through Flowed Meadow and are likely to see many migrating and breeding songbirds. We may possibly see the pair of Bald Eagles which spent the winter in this area, as well as all sorts of ducks, mergansers and grebes in Purgatory cove and on the river. Bring binoculars if you have them and boots for wet ground. All levels of birding experience are welcome. Meet at Auburndale Playground ("The Cove") parking lot on West Pine Street. Trip Leader is Jane Sender (617-462-8425).

Sunday, May 16, 10 am
Saw Mill Park Garlic Mustard Pull

See the description of Garlic Mustard on the event for Sunday, May 9. Meet at the parking lot on Vine Street in South Newton. Visit <http://www.newtonconservators.org/20sawmill.htm> for further directions. Trip Leader is Katherine Howard (617-527-1796).

Sunday, May 16, 12-3 pm
3Rd Annual Bike Newton Rally and Friends and Family Ride
Newton City Hall - War Memorial Steps / Circle

The 3rd annual Rally and Friends and Family Ride will be held on May 16, 2010 from 12 - 3 PM at the Newton City Hall War Memorial Steps and Circle. A big crowd is expected this year, perhaps 500 people. There will be vendor booths and services, live entertainment, ice cream, and speakers including Steve Miller of the Libable Streets Alliance, and Mayor Setti Warren (who will be leading the ride itself!). The event is sponsored by the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation and supported by the Newton Conservators, Green Decade Coalition, Village Bank, Coldwell Bankers, West Suburban Y, JP Licks, Whole Foods, Panera, Blacker's Bakery, International Bike, Harris Cyclery, Eastern Mountain Sports, Needham Bikes, and others. To register for the ride ahead of time (encouraged!) please visit http://www.bikenewton.org/Bikenewton.org/NEWS_events.html Newton has applied to the League of American Bicyclists for Newton to be officially designated a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists. Of course, there is much work to do to improve bicycling safety and bicycling accommodations in Newton in order to move the application along. Bike Newton would welcome your involvement and input. For more information visit www.bikenewton.org or contact Lois Levin at 617 527-1237, bikenewton@gmail.com.

Monday, May 17, 7 pm
Appreciating Earth's Legacy: A Visual Introduction to Our Planet's Biodiversity
with Dan Perlman, Brandeis University
Newton Free Library, Druker Auditorium

For more than three billion years - the majority of the Earth's history - evolving life forms have changed the lands, waters, and atmosphere of our planet, creating the world into which humans evolved a mere 200,000 years ago. The Earth's remarkable array of biological diversity creates oxygen and food, and performs a variety of critical ecosystem services such as purifying water and cycling nutrients. In addition, the species and ecosystems around us offer intellectual and spiritual sustenance. Many of us take these services for granted and think of human civilizations as self-supporting entities - but all human societies depend entirely on healthy ecosystems, and they always will. Join Dan Perlman of Brandeis University as he illustrates this interactive discussion with 360° panoramas, photographs, and sounds that he has recorded in his travels around the US and to locations such as Madagascar, Costa Rica, Tanzania, India, the Galapagos Islands, the Amazon - and Cold Spring Park in Newton. Dan L. Perlman teaches conservation biology and ecology at Brandeis University. He has co-authored three textbooks on conservation biology and ecology, including *Conserving Earth's Biodiversity* (an interactive CD-ROM he created with Edward O. Wilson). An avid nature photographer, his photographs have been displayed in exhibits at the American Museum of Natural History in New York and the Museum of Science in Boston, and he has been the photographer for two children's books (one on a Costa Rican rainforest and the other on ants). He recently launched a Web site from which he freely distributes teaching materials he has developed for ecology and environmental studies (www.EcoLibrary.org). He has been awarded university-wide teaching awards at Brandeis University and at Harvard University, where he taught conservation biology part-time for nine years. He received a Ph.D. from Harvard University's Department of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology. Find out more about this at <http://www.greendecade.org/events.html#ess>. Tea will be served at this event -- please bring your own mug! This event is part of Green Decade's Environmental Speaker Series and is co-sponsored by the Newton Free Library.

Thursday, May 20, 5:30-7:30 pm
An Evening to Honor Fran Towle
Charles River Country Club, 483 Dedham Street, Newton Centre

Fran Towle, former Newton Parks and Recreation Commissioner, served the City of Newton for more than 40 years. Come join friends and colleagues to share stories and memories of her legacy in Newton. There will be Hors D'oeuvres (thanks to a "benefactor") and a Cash Bar. Please RSVP to 617-796-1510 if you are interested in attending.

Sunday, May 23, 1 pm
Garlic Mustard Pull at Dolan Pond Conservation Area

Meet at Dolan Pond Conservation Area in West Newton at 1 pm - please note the afternoon starting time. Street Parking is available near the four entrances at Auburndale Avenue, Webster Park, Stratford Road and Cumberland Road. This is an exciting year for garlic mustard pulling at Dolan because plant pull crews have been very active in the last two years eradicating nearly every flowering stem before they had a chance to set seed. We are close to eradicating this soil-damaging invasive from this gem of a pocket conservation area. Crews also removed nearly every knotweed stem, and although knotweed removal takes years to complete, each time it gets easier. We will mix in some general nature study so bring binoculars and hand lenses for observing birds, bugs, flowers, and a good variety of pond life. Trip Leader is Eric Olson (617-872-9928).

Sunday, May 23, 2 pm
Webster Woods Walk

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. Meet at the end of Warren Street where there is parking for 5-8 cars. Warren Street intersects with Langley Road near Newton Centre. Trip Leader is Octo Barnett (617-969-6988).

Sunday, May 23, 12-5 pm
28th Annual House Tour - Historic Newton

The 28th Annual House Tour features ten homes that highlight interior design, architecture, and historic renovation throughout Newton. The tour benefits programming at Historic Newton. Advance sale tickets: \$25 for nonmembers/\$20 for members of Historic Newton. For more information, call Historic Newton at 617.796.1450. New this year: Bike-friendly directions will be available for participants of this year's Newton House Tour. Pick them up when you get your tickets on the morning of the tour at the Jackson Homestead. Meet at the Homestead at 11:30am on tour day to join a group of bicyclists to bike the tour with a leader. Visit www.historicnewton.org for more info.

Wednesday, May 26, 6-9 pm

Newton Conservators Annual Dinner Meeting American Legion Post 440, 295 California Street

The Newton Conservators hold their Annual Dinner Meeting at Post 440 this year and new Mayor Setti Warren is the featured speaker. The Environmentalist of the Year Award will be presented to the Newton Almanac Committee, the Charles Maynard Award to Elaine Gentile, City of Newton Director of Environmental Affairs, and Directors' Awards will go to Pat Rand and Penny Caponigro. Come at 6 pm for the informal portion of the evening and take a look at some of the poster presentations by Newton Conservators grant recipients. Newton Conservators members should have received an invitation in the mail. Tickets are \$30 and may be purchased online at:
<https://s08.123signup.com/servlet/SignUp?PG=1532278182400&P=1532278133476107150857400&Info=>

Sunday, May 30, 10 am Japanese Knotweed Pull at Flowed Meadow

Japanese Knotweed is a bamboo-like invader from Asia that can create dense 8' tall single-species stands. This stand, located just behind the ball field at the Auburndale Playground, is spreading into the understory of the Flowed Meadow Conservation Area. Knotweed is a tough adversary, not because it's spiny or strong or even particularly hard to pull. But like the magic brooms in Disney's "Fantasia" Sorcerer's Apprentice, any small root fragments we leave behind will spring back to life the following year. Government scientists are seeking biological control agents for this species in Asia but until and unless they find some, we are stuck controlling the plant by hand. Persistence pays with this species, and eradication is possible, but it takes several years to truly finish the job. Here is a chance to get in on the first year of work at a new Knotweed location. WHAT TO BRING: Pitchforks, garden spades, and hand pruners, if you have them. This is a follow up to our April invasive pull at this location. WHAT TO BRING: Pitchforks, garden spades, and hand pruners, if you have them. Meet at Auburndale Playground ("The Cove") parking lot on West Pine Street. Trip Leader Jane Sender (617-462-8425).

Saturday, June 5, 12 - 2:30 pm Fern Walk with Don Lubin

Flowed Meadow is a relatively wild area north of Auburndale Park. We will see about ten types of ferns and a club-moss. There will be no real climbing involved, but we may go off-trail and insects may be a nuisance. The Newton Conservators Land Management Committee has been systematically surveying the city's open spaces to document the existing biodiversity. In terms of ferns and related plants (pteridophytes), they have found 28 species and hybrids. Some occur infrequently and are difficult to get to, and some are very subtle to distinguish. This trip will provide an introduction to some that are quite common and easily recognized with a little practice. Meet at the Auburndale playground ("The Cove") parking lot on West Pine Street. Trip Leader is fern expert, Don Lubin (617-254-8464).

Sunday, June 6, 2 pm Charles River Canoe Trip

Join us for an afternoon paddling along the Charles River, leisurely enjoying the wildlife and river views. Meet at the Charles River Canoe & Kayak (www.paddleboston/newton.com) rental dock at 2401 Commonwealth Avenue (Rt. 30) near the Newton Marriott Hotel at 2 pm. There is a parking lot (off Norumbega Road) across the river from the rental dock where you can park your car, and then walk back across the bridge. If you have your own canoe or kayak you can put it in the water from

this parking lot. Dress appropriately. A hat, sunscreen, drinks and snacks are recommended to bring along. Thunderstorms will cancel the trip. Trip leader is Bill Hagar (617-964-2644).

Sunday, June 6, 10 am

Blue Heron Bridge Floodplain Forest and River Bank Invasives and Ecology

See previous descriptions of garlic mustard and knotweed challenges. Eric Olsen reports: "This is the third year working along the Charles River Greenway at this bridge site, helping the Trustees of the Reservations with their stewardship of this floodplain forest. We will be working again on garlic mustard and knotweed, but there are other goals here too that require maintenance of a wildflower meadow. You will see natives like skunk cabbage, may apple, jewelweed, and several species of fern, plus there are numerous riverside birds, and of course the beautiful bridge itself. We will again mix in some general nature study so bring binoculars and an insect net and hand lens if you have them." Park at the Pleasant Street Super Stop and 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. Turn left and follow path to the bridge. If lost, confused, call for clarification once you are in range. Trip leader is Eric Olson (617-872-9928)

Monday, June 7, 7-9 pm

The History, Growth, and Future of Newton's Community Trees

Lecture by Marc Welch - Director, Newton Division of Urban Forestry

Newton Free Library - Druker Auditorium

Newton's Urban Forest is a broad and diverse resource that touches the lives of many people in Newton. The City's Urban Forest is the foundation and frame work of the City's nickname - The Garden City. Early on in Newton's history the City's trees were valued and cared for as a priority of the City's government. This program will provide a glimpse at how Newton built and managed its Urban Forest and how its managers were pioneers in the industry. We will look at the major historic impacts to our City's trees including insects, diseases, and human intervention. The future holds many new challenges for the City's trees; new and innovative approaches are being explored to meet those challenges. Marc Welch is the Director of the City's Division of Urban Forestry and has been managing the City's Urban Forest since 2002. He holds a Bachelors Degree in Urban Forestry and has been a Massachusetts Certified Arborist for over ten years. He is a past president of the Massachusetts Tree Wardens and Foresters Association and is an active member of the organization's Executive Board. Prior to working for Newton he was the City Arborist for the City of Boston and an Arborist working for the USDA Forest Service. This lecture is organized by the Newton Tree Conservancy (www.newtontreeconservancy.org) in cooperation with the Newton Conservators. For more information contact Katherine Howard Howard (617-527-1796). Thanks to the Newton Free Library (Ellen Meyers) for assistance in providing the wonderful Library Auditorium as a venue for this lecture. By the way, check out this story on some of the tree plantings done in April: <http://blogs.wickedlocal.com/newton/2010/04/27/this-neighborhood-just-got-a-little-shady/>

Tuesday, June 8, 7 pm

20th Anniversary Celebration - Green Decade / Newton

Lasell College - Auburndale

Green Decade/Newton will be celebrating 20 years of environmental leadership at a celebration honoring Peter Smith on June 8, 2010, at Lasell College in Auburndale. The celebration will include light hors d'oeuvres, wine, desserts, live entertainment and a silent auction. There will be a presentation to honor Peter Smith, one of the founding members of Green Decade, past Co-President,

longtime Co-Editor of the Green News, Liaison to the Newton/Needham Chamber of Commerce and a most dedicated environmental steward for our community. Visit <http://www.greendecade.org/anniversary20.html> for more info.

Sunday, June 13, 8 am Cutler Park Bird Walk

This walk will do a loop around the pond near Kendrick Street, and go south a mile or so. This area is a large expanse of woods, wetlands and marsh. Expect to see common woodland birds, some warblers, and the willow flycatchers along the river. Meet at parking lot off Kendrick Street on the Needham line just over the bridge. Dress appropriately. Boots are recommended as the area can be wet/marshy. Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome. Trip Leader is Pete Gilmore (617-969-1513).

MWRA Water Main Break Bad for the Charles River (from the CRWA news)

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority's (MWRA) water connector pipe that began leaking Saturday morning (and then broke completely) resulted in over 8 million gallons an hour of water pouring into the Charles River. For a time, the flow of the river at the Waltham gage, downstream of the break, doubled from approximately 350 cubic feet per second (cfs) to approximately 700 cfs. The pipe connection broke 20 feet below ground near Recreation Road, and the gushing water carried an estimated 400 cubic yards of soil and sediment directly into the river. The pipe was repaired Sunday morning, and a boil water order was just lifted today for the 2 million people served by the MWRA. CRWA staff and volunteers have been monitoring the river, tracking the plume of fine sediment that is moving down the river. We are especially worried about river herring, which have begun their annual migration up into the Charles earlier than usual and have already been spotted entering the river to spawn. The river ecosystem has been extremely stressed during the past month, first by March's huge floods, then by the Department of Conservation and Recreation's rapid drawdown of the river to allow repairs to the Moody Street dam, and now by the flood of drinking water and sediments from this water pipe break. CRWA staff are doing our best to monitor the river, and will be working with government agencies and other organizations to undertake any necessary measures to protect the Charles.

Editor's note: Our last e-Bulletin was really just an alert prompted by the boil water crisis in Newton and other towns. Due to the city's cutting of the budget for a reverse 9/11 last year, there was not an easy way to contact all Newton Citizens quickly (except for those with children in school). We thought it appropriate to help promulgate the news quickly through our email bulletin system.

Newton Conservators e-Bulletin

If you wish to subscribe, just send a note with your request to subscribe to the Newton Conservators e-Bulletin to dolanpond@aol.com. The current edition of our paper newsletter (for those who don't receive it in the mail) can be easily downloaded in PDF form at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/>. Event listings for our e-Bulletin can be sent to dolanpond@aol.com. This e-Bulletin is a service of the Newton Conservators, Newton's open space advocates since 1961. Membership information can be found online at our website - <http://www.newtonconservators.org/membership.htm>. You can join the organization or even renew your membership online now!

The new Newton Conservators Almanac is perfect for Newton nature lovers. Spend 12 months

getting to know Newton's parks with the Newton Conservators Almanac. The Almanac is organized month by month with "quick to locate" seasonal color bands. 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. It contains beautiful color photographs of the flora and fauna you are likely to find in Newton. Each entry displays the common name, scientific name, and a group graphic with description and local field notes. It makes a great companion to our trail guide. The book is \$21.95 plus \$2.50 for postage per copy. Send a check for \$24.45 per copy along with your name, address, city, state, zip and phone to Newton Conservators Almanac, PO Box 590011, Newton Centre, MA 02459. Check <http://www.newtonconservators.org/almanac.htm> for more info.

- *E-Bulletin Editor Ted Kuklinski, Newton Conservators (dolanpond@aol.com)*

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