

Newton Conservators **E-Bulletin** Thursday, May 13, 2010

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

## UPDATE

This is a busy season for outdoor and nature activities. We wanted to first of all alert you to an error in our last e-Bulletin. The Newton Community Farm "Biggest Seedling Sale Ever" will take place on Sunday, May 16 from 12-4, NOT ON Saturday, May 15, as we had INCORRECTLY published in our last e-Bulletin. There is also a bird walk on Sunday at Flowed Meadow (8 am), a Garlic Mustard Pull at Saw Mill Park (10 am) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Newton Rally and Friends and Family Ride (12-3 pm).



Newton Conservators Board of Advisors member Jon Regosin, a biologist with the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species program, led a wonderful program on Saturday, May 8. Vernal pools are small ponds which provide important breeding grounds for many amphibians and support a great diversity of insects and other invertebrates. The assembled group was lucky enough to find a Wood Frog tadpole, unusual at Bare Pond,

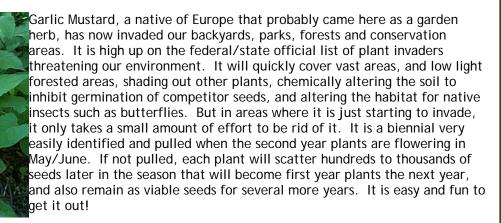
some Tree Frog tadpoles, and some Spotted Salamander eggs which had not yet hatched.



The Mother's Day Bird Walk with Alison Leary at Flowed Meadow was a great success - it was sunny and windy but nonetheless there were over 30 species reported that morning. Bluebirds and Tree Swallows have taken up residence in the next boxes. A variety of warblers, including Prairie, Yellow, Black and White, Common Yellowthroat, Blackpoll, Yellow-rumped, American Redstart, and Northern Parula were present. Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawks graced the skies and a Ruby-throated Hummingbird and Indigo Bunting made an appearance in the lower garden area. Baltimore Orioles, Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos, an Eastern Phoebe, and a Great Crested Flycatcher were also noted in addition to the "regulars".



You may have noticed that "Invasives Removal" is lately one of the main focal areas for the Newton Conservators (e.g. at last Sunday's efforts at Cold Spring Park). We have a number of efforts mainly geared toward Japanese Knotweed and Garlic Mustard.



Garlic Mustard removal is particularly critical at this time of year. It is relatively easy to recognize and pull out the second year taller plants. They are still flowering but have already started the transition to producing their thin spiky seed pods which are capable of propagating this invasive even further. Check your own yards, walkways, and nearby green patches for them, pull them out, and dispose of them in the trash (not yard waste). Here is a picture of Garlic Mustard with both the flowers (which will be gone soon) and the spiky seed pods. The plant in the background is none other than the prolific Japanese Knotweed (which seeds in late August). Both of these invasives require persistent efforts from year to year if they are to be eradicated.

Holy Leaves - Batman! You may have noticed the rather ratty look of many of the leaves on the trees of Newton, or perhaps a sound something like rain in the forest (actually the rain of poppy seed sized caterpillar fecal pellets). Newton is under a severe attack from the Winter Moth - at this time of year they are those little green "inchworms" hanging by a thread from trees which will appear in droves come November.

Check out the list of upcoming events below (including a number of new events!)

## **MAY - JUNE EVENTS**

Friday, May 14, 6 - 7:30 pm

#### Wildflower Walk with Cornelia Warren Cedar Hill, 240 Beaver Street, Waltham

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, lady slippers, and other wildflowers. The walk will start at UMASS Center and then walk across the street to Cedar Hill. From the 1850's on, the S. D. Warren family acquired land in Waltham. The largest tract was located on both sides of Beaver Street just east of the Lyman Estate lands. This tract, the Warrens' homestead, was known as Cedar Hill. Upon the death of her mother, Cornelia Warren acquired Cedar Hill and ran a successful farm and dairy operation there. She was a leader in the development of sustainable agriculture with innovative uses of the property. Ever the philanthropist, she instructed her trustees to partition the Cedar Hill estate and give the lands to institutions which would preserve the lands for public education and enjoyment. Find further info at www.walthamlandtrust.org.

# Saturday, May 15 & Sunday, May 16, 11 am - 5 pm Newton Open Studios 2010 - FREE!

Great art events, right here in Newton! It's the annual spring art tour where 175 emerging and established artists and craftspeople invite you into their homes and studios at locations all across Newton. Browse and shop - Meet the artists - Find paintings, jewelry, pottery, sculpture, photography, watercolor, and much more. You can find lots of landscape and photography work. Check out <u>www.newtonopenstudios.org</u> for a listing of artists, information on each one, an interactive map which will let you select artists to visit by media type. Among the many artists this year are Suzette Barbier (www.suzettebarbier.com , Nahanton Park birder, painter, and silkscreener), Bev Droz (www.bevdroz.com , former city volunteer coordinator - watercolors, landscapes), and Marcie Scudder (<u>www.marciescudderphotography.com</u> - who is showing new work "The Dogs of Old Cold Spring" at Newton Highlands Congregational Church).

#### 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 (Newton Conservators Walk & Activity Series)

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

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#### Sunday, May 16, 12-3 pm 3<sup>Rd</sup> 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 <a href="http://www.bikenewton.org/Bikenewton.org/NEWS\_events.html">http://www.bikenewton.org/Bikenewton.org/NEWS\_events.html</a> 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 <a href="http://www.bikenewton.org/newton@gmail.com">www.bikenewton.org/newton@gmail.com</a>.

#### Monday, May 17, 6 pm Bike Newton's Weekly "No Rider Left Behind" Family Friendly Rides Around Newton Ride to Newton Community Farm

Bike Newton sponsors weekly rides on Mondays at 6 pm. Meet at the Newton Library on Homer Steet. The leader is Nathan Aranow (<u>Nathan.aranow@verizon.net</u>, 617-969-6227). Check out <u>http://www.bikenewton.org/Bikenewton.org/Rides.html</u>for the current ride schedule. Other rides will be on May 24 (Russo's), May 31 (Echo Bridge), June7 (Cordingly Dam), and June 14, 21, 28 (with destination to be announced).

#### 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. Find out more about this at <a href="http://www.greendecade.org/events.html#ess">http://www.greendecade.org/events.html#ess</a>. This event is part of Green Decade's Environmental Speaker Series and is co-sponsored by the Newton Free Library.

#### Monday, May 17, 7 pm Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission City Hall, Room 209

The Parks and Recreation Commission will be considering a proposal for some usage of Nahanton Park land by the Newton Community Farm. There may be some recommendations presented by the Off Leash Area Working Group for a small number of possible off-leash areas (out of the 24 areas presented at the last meeting). Of note is that the current off leash ordinance expires at the end of June and a newly drafted one is in the works (this for the Aldermen to decide).

#### 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 (Newton Conservators Walk & Activity Series)

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 (Newton Conservators Walk & Activity Series)

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 28<sup>th</sup> Annual House Tour - Historic Newton

The 28<sup>th</sup> 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.orgfor 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 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

#### (Newton Conservators Walk & Activity Series)

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. 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 (Newton Conservators Walk & Activity Series)

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 (Newton Conservators Walk & Activity Series)

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 (Newton Conservators Walk & Activity Series)

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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.htmlfor more info.

Sunday, June 13, 8 am

#### Cutler Park Bird Walk (Newton Conservators Walk & Activity Series)

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).

#### Sunday, June 13, 2 pm Chesnut Hill Reservoir: Clean Water and Bucolic Recreation for a Growing City

Take a brisk 1.5 mile walk around the Chestnut Hill Reservoir and find out about its role in supplying Boston with clean water from 1868 until the 1970s. At the Waterworks Building, we will be joined by a member of the soon-to-be-opened Waterworks Museum who will show us the great steam engines that powered the water distribution and give us details about how the Reservoir was constructed and how its structures have been sensitively converted into condos. Meet in the angled parking lot on Chestnut Hill Driveway overlooking the Reservoir. From Newton Center, take Beacon Street east to Boston College. Immediately after the athletic fields and right at the Reservoir, turn left onto Chestnut Hill Driveway (Thomas More Dr.). Take the Driveway as it turns right at the Chestnut Hill Reservation sign. Lot is about 1/3 mile up the hill. (Info from Lucy Caldwell Stair).

### Newton Conservators e-Bulletin

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<u>http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/</u>. Event listings for our e-Bulletin can be sent to <u>dolanpond@aol.com</u>. 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 - <u>http://www.newtonconservators.org/membership.htm</u>. You can join the organization or even renew

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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

<u>http://www.newtonconservators.org/walks.htm</u> and a PDF copy can be downloaded at <u>http://www.newtonconservators.org/events/walksspring10.pdf</u>. The new Newton Conservators Almanac is perfect for Newton nature lovers. Check <u>http://www.newtonconservators.org/almanac.htmfor more info</u>.

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=

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

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