

Subject:

E-Bulletin - May 13, 2011 - Newton SERVES!



Newton Conservators **E-Bulletin**

Friday, May 13, 2011

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



Newton in Spring . . .

How quickly Newton has turned from brown to green from a short month ago. Our spring activity series is well under way and turnout has been terrific. Check out the remaining event schedule in this bulletin. In addition to walks, we continue our critical invasives removal activities at a number of key locations. This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Newton Conservators and we have a wonderful dinner planned on Wednesday, May 25 to celebrate. Order your tickets by this coming Monday!! NewtonSERVES is Sunday and there are loads of community service projects that could use your help, including three invasive removals projects (see below) organized by the Newton Conservators. What a great time to get outdoors into the open spaces of the Garden City!

Time to Get Your Garlic Mustard Out

Here, there, and everywhere - garlic mustard is in bloom now - and NOW is the time to get it out, before it goes to seed. Start in your yard, and move outward from there!

Garlic mustard is an edible plant that came here from Europe - but in this country, it is an invader with no natural controls. It rapidly covers vast areas, shading out native plants, altering the soil chemistry to inhibit growth of competitor plants, and destroying the habitat of native insects such as butterflies. It has become a huge problem in other parts of the country. Fortunately, in areas where it is just starting, it is easy to get rid of it. It is a biennial, easily identified and pulled in May and June, when the second year plants are flowering. If not removed, each plant will scatter hundreds to thousands of seeds.



Pull the plants NOW by their roots, insert into plastic trash bag and dispose in your TRASH (do NOT dispose with yard waste or compost - the seeds are still viable and can spread). Keep checking your yard because plants can spring up later and produce seed pods.

If you want to help beyond your yard and neighborhood, Newton Conservators has several sessions in May/June as does NewtonSERVES (May 15) to care for our parks and conservation lands. We can all

help to keep Newton's natural areas beautiful and places where native plants, insects and wildlife can survive and thrive.

<http://newtonconservators.org/walks.htm>
<http://www.newtoncommunitypride.org/NewtonSERVES.html>
<http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/plants/garlicmustard.shtml>

Katherine Howard

Calendar of Newton Conservators Events

Each Spring and Fall, the Newton Conservators organizes a series of walks to local open space areas. These walks are led by knowledgeable leaders and are open to the public. They normally last for an hour or two. Some events are for bicycle or canoe. These walks are a great way to get to know open space areas in Newton. Below is the current walk schedule. Please note that walks meet at different times. Some trips are weather-dependent. Contact the trip leader if in doubt. A downloadable walk schedule is available at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/walks.htm>. Find info here also on our 50th Anniversary celebration (May 25) and upcoming lectures.



Sunday, May 15, 2011, 10 am to Noon Garlic Mustard Pull at Dolan Pond (NewtonServes Project)

This is an exciting year for garlic mustard pulling at Dolan Pond because plant pull crews have been very active in the last three years working to eradicate nearly every flowering stem before they had a chance to set seed. Wear long pants, long sleeve shirt, and gloves would be helpful. 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. Meet at the Webster Park entrance to Dolan Pond conservation area in W. Newton. Street parking is available near the four entrances at Auburndale Avenue, Webster Park, Stratford and Cumberland. Trip leader is Ted Kuklinski (617-332-7753). Information available at the Newton Serves site: <http://www.newtoncommunitypride.org/NewtonSERVES.html>



Sunday, May 15, 2011, 10 am to Noon Garlic Mustard Pull at Sawmill Brook Conservation Area (NewtonServes Project)

See description of garlic mustard. Wear long pants and garden gloves. Meet at the parking lot on Vine Street. Trip leader is Katherine Howard (617-527-1796). Information is available at the Newton Serves site: <http://www.newtoncommunitypride.org/NewtonSERVES.html>

Sunday, May 15, 2011, 10 am to Noon Garlic Mustard Pull at Blue Heron Bridge (NewtonServes Project)

This is the fourth year working along the Charles River Greenway at this bridge on the Charles River Path, helping The Trustees of Reservations with their stewardship of the floodplain forest. We will again mix in some general nature study, so bring binoculars, an insect net, and hand lens if you have them. Park at the Pleasant Street Super Stop N Shop



parking lot in Watertown (near Russo's) at the corner farthest 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. Trip leader is Eric Olson (617-872-9928). Information is at the Newton Serves site: <http://www.newtoncommunitypride.org/NewtonSERVES.html>

**Saturday, May 21, 2011, 8am
Birding and Boating Trip at Nahanton Park**

Join us for a leisurely canoe/kayak trip investigating bird life along the banks of the Charles River from Charles River Canoe & Kayak's newest location in Nahanton Park. This is a lovely 15-mile stretch of the Charles, where 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. We can expect to see shorebirds like spotted sandpipers, great blue herons, common egrets, and several species of warblers, as well as raptors like red tailed and red shouldered hawks. Co-Sponsored with Friends of Nahanton Park. If you have your own canoe or kayak you can put it in the water from this parking lot. Dress appropriately. A hat, sunscreen, snacks, and drinks are recommended. Newton Conservators members get a 10% discount on canoe and kayak rentals. Meet at the Nahanton Street entrance next to the river. Parking is available inside the park.



Trip leader is Pete Gilmore (617-969-1513). Note: rain date is Sunday, May 22.

**Saturday, May 21, 2011, 10am to noon
Follow-up Garlic Mustard Pulls (Blue Heron Bridge and/or other locations TBD)**

See description of Blue Heron Bridge and parking instructions. Check with leaders; locations near the Bridge will be chosen depending on where the need is greatest. We may be several hundred yards away from the Bridge so do not hesitate to call the phone numbers provided, if you arrive a bit late.

Trip leaders are Eric Olson (617-872-9928) and Katherine Howard (617-527-1796).



**Wednesday, May 25, 2011, 6 pm
Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration
American Legion Post 440 - 295 California Street**

The Newton Conservators cordially invite you to it's 50th Anniversary Celebration. At 6 pm will be a social gathering, silent auction and hors d'oeuvres. Come and bid on wonderful items from our donors. At 7 pm, dinner will be served in conjunction with our annual business meeting, award ceremony and general program. Our keynote speaker will be Bob Wilber, Director of Land Protection for the Massachusetts Audubon Society. You may reserve online at www.newtonconservators.org. Tickets are \$35. Newton Conservators will receive a mailed invitation. RSVP is requested by Monday May 16. This year we will be on the main level in a larger space! Tell your friends and invite them too.



**Sunday, June 5, 2011, 10 am to Noon
Japanese Knotweed Pull at Hammond Pond**

Japanese Knotweed is a bamboo-like invader from Asia that can create



dense 8' tall single-species stands. 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. Bring pitchforks, garden spades, and hand pruners, if you have them. Meet at the small parking lot off Hammond Pond Parkway adjacent to pond and within view of the former Macy's store. Trip leader is Eric Olson (617-872-9928). (photo by Steven Sulewski)

Sunday, June 5, 2011, 2 pm
Canoe/Kayak Trip at Nahanton Park

Join us for an afternoon canoe trip from Nahanton Park. (See description of a morning birding trip in May. Co-Sponsored with Friends of Nahanton Park. If you have your own canoe or kayak you can put it in the water from this parking lot. Dress appropriately. A hat, sunscreen, snacks, and drinks are recommended. Newton Conservators members get a 10% discount on canoe and kayak rentals. Meet at the Nahanton Street entrance next to the river. Parking is available inside the park. Trip leader is Bill Hagar (617-964-2644)



Sunday, June 12, 2011, 2 pm
Newton Aqueducts Hike

This is a very popular 4-6 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 near the Waban MBTA Station. Trip leader is Henry Finch (617-964-4488)



Tuesday, June 14, 7:30 pm
Photo Lecture on Birds by Brooks Mathewson
Newton Free Library - Druker Auditorium



Brooks Mathewson is an outstanding bird educator and photographer. His lecture last spring at the library was amazing. Don't miss! The program is co-sponsored by the Newton Free Library. Brooks has been teaching bird courses for Newton Community Education (<https://newtoncommunityed.org/>) and is teaching the course "A Birding Year", starting May 10, (<https://newtoncommunityed.org/viewDesc.php?CourseNumber=Z2004> starting .) startig May 10)

Monday June 27, 7 pm
Darwin Lecture - Ned Friedman, Director of the Arnold Arboretum
Newton Free Library - Druker Auditorium



Professor Friedman will speak on Darwin and the origin of flowering plants. As he noted on the Arnold Arboretum's Web site: "Charles Darwin spent a lifetime studying the big questions of evolutionary biology, and he was baffled by the origin of flowering plants. Recent advances in the fossil record offer clues to understanding what these plants looked like, where they lived, and how they reproduced. We will explore what Darwin termed 'the abominable mystery.'" Ned Friedman is

Arnold Professor of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology and Director of the Arnold Arboretum at Harvard University. The program is co-sponsored by Newton Tree Conservancy and Newton Conservators.

Thursday July 14th 7:30 pm
My Green Manifesto by David Gessner
Newton Free Library - Druker Auditorium

David Gessner will discuss his "call for a new environmentalism, inspired by a canoe trip down the Charles River with Dan Driscoll." His new book suggests that rather than bemoan the fact that the world is doomed, we would do better to fight like hell for our neighborhoods. My Green Manifesto is a celebration of the raw pleasure that people can take from wildness, even from a limited wild like the once famously-dirty Charles. It is both a cry for renewed contact and a love song to what is left. And, finally, the book is an attempt to break nature writing out of its eco-ghetto, and into the larger world. David Gessner is a noted nature writer and associate professor at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, where he founded the award-winning literary journal, Ecotone. . This program is co-sponsored by the Newton Free Library and there will also be a book signing.



**The Newton Conservators Turn 50:
Why We Really Matter**

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Newton Conservators. Our reason for being is as compelling today as it was in 1961. What's our reason for being? Joni Mitchell still said it best in her emblematic 1970 hit song Big Yellow Taxi: "Don't it always seem to go/That you don't know what you've got/Til it's gone/ They paved paradise/And put up a parking lot..." Fortunately, fifty years ago the Conservators knew what we had before it was gone, and we still know that today.



Going many years back, one early Conservators' project was Norumbega Park, the thirteen acres of land along the Charles River next to the Newton Marriott. This conservation area would probably be a number of parking lots today but for the intervention of the Conservators and our partners. Today you can enjoy a walk there and listen to the migrant songbirds as they start their annual breeding, rather than the sound of car engines starting up. For that we can thank those Conservators and others who knew what would be lost, and permanently carved out a place for birds and other species to live and breed - and for humans to enjoy.

There are dozens of other similar accomplishments to celebrate from the past 50 years. Many Newton parks and conservation areas - Nahanton Park, Webster, Kennard, Saw Mill Brook, Cold Spring Park, Auburndale Park and Flowed Meadow, Ordway Park, Dolan Pond, Crystal Lake beach expansion and Awtrey Dell* to name a few- would also be parking lots or buildings if not for our work along with our partners. Our efforts, however, have not been aimed only at keeping special parcels from development. They also have gone to protect land already set aside as open space. Here's one recent story that shows the constant pressure on open space to slowly evolve into something else - like a city dump.

Over this past winter, conditions at areas of Nahanton Park, one of our real Newton treasures, went from bad to worse. Snow had been trucked in and stored in huge mounds for months, leaving the well known Nahanton Park meadow, often the site of spring nesting bluebirds and swallows, deeply rutted and torn up. Piles of tree limbs and Christmas trees made the park truly begin to take on a dump- like appearance.

Together with the Friends of Nahanton Park, we stood up for the integrity of the park, and convinced the City to no longer store tree limbs there, to reconsider next year's snow storage policy to avoid using parks or conservation land, and to restore the meadow as soon as possible - we hope in time for the birds to decide it's safe to nest again this year. We need your help to celebrate and foster this watchdog work, which we do day in and day out.

Our annual meeting, with the first-ever silent auction and awards presentation on May 25, will celebrate all of the wonderful accomplishments of the Conservators and their partners to preserve and protect open space in Newton. Details can be found at www.newtonconservators.org. Proceeds from the auction and from our generous sponsors will support our land acquisition program-our efforts to save additional appropriate Newton parcels, like those abutting conservation land or along the Charles River-from future development through various tools such as conservation restrictions or outright purchase. While we are often able to draw on our in-house expertise for these types of transactions, funds are needed to offset some of the upfront expenses of protecting this kind of property-such as appraisals sufficient for IRS regulations and various fees-as well as for the future monitoring of the property. Our speaker at the meeting is Bob Wilber, Land Protection Director for the Massachusetts Audubon Society, which now holds conservation restrictions on more than 5000 acres throughout the state. Bob, an inspiring speaker, will share thoughts about the importance of this work in a suburban environment.

Many of you support our work through memberships, volunteering and other donations. We hope you have received our invitations and look forward to seeing you on May 25. To those who don't know us as well, please check us out on our website and join us on May 25 to learn more. Please consider joining our efforts for the next fifty years.

*If you do not know where to find a Newton park or conservation area, please take a look at the 2011 edition of our very popular Walking Trails Guide (available at www.newtonconservators.org).

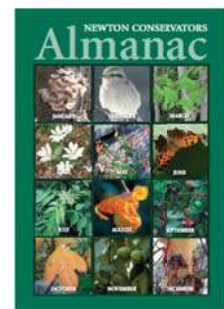
- Jane Sender, President

Newton Conservators e-Bulletin

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Did you know that you can Join the Newton Conservators online. And consider a gift membership for a conservation-minded friend (new members get a trail guide as well)! Visit <http://www.newtonconservators.org/membership.htm> for details on membership options. Did you know that you can register and pay for membership, events (like the annual Dinner Meeting), buy a copy of our Almanac or newly revised Trail Guide, 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=>



Mission: *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 organization was formed as a not-for-profit 50 years ago in June 1961.

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



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