



Newton Conservators E-Bulletin

Friday, May 8, 2015

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



May Days are meant for getting outside!

After our long snowy winter, we wondered if spring would ever come, The remarkable turning of the earth from brown to green is well underway even if a little behind schedule this year. For birders the first two weeks in May are the highlight of the spring migration. The warm weather this week has brought back many of our resident birds and visiting migrants looking for a green stopover on their northward bound journey. Migrating land birds usually travel at night on a southwest wind and such conditions are favorable to an abundance of warblers and other interesting birds the morning after and sometimes days after. The avian soundscape changes dramatically in early May and you can hear it if you pay attention to the changing cacophony in the morning and indeed throughout the day. The twitter of the chimney swifts overhead - the original twitter! - can be heard now along with the garrulous sound of the catbird, the sweet song of the Baltimore orioles, and fast paced tweets of the yellow warblers along ponds and river shoreline. Check out your backyard for warblers, easier to see in oak trees which are later to fill in - just follow your ears. We are expecting great conditions for this coming Sunday's annual **Mother's Day Bird Walk** (8 am) at Nahanton Park! And don't miss the **May 16th bird walk** at Cold Spring Park the following weekend (see Pete Gilmore's excellent [article](#) in the latest [Newton Conservators newsletter](#)).

Below you can see a number of interesting hikes and walking events to keep you busy. Please save Saturday, June 6 for a very special event called the "June Doin'" to be held at Nahanton Park - a day long festival of outdoor activities for the whole family. And on Thursday, June 18, we will have another special presentation at the Newton Free Library by Jennifer Steel, Newton's Environmental Planner, on our conservation lands and a vision for the future.

The Newton Conservators Annual Dinner Meeting occurred this past Wednesday and congratulations are due to award winners Alison Leary (Environmentalist of the Year), Richard Primack (Charles Johnson Maynard Award), and Greg Maslowe (Directors Award). Featured speaker Rob Warren of the Trustees of Reservations provided a great overview of that organization and its parallels to the Newton Conservators. Thanks to the dinner sponsors Anonymous, Lalor and Patricia Burdick, Charles River Canoe and Kayak, Crystal Lake Conservancy, Alderman Ruthanne Fuller, Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston, Marion Presley, Shaevel and Krems, LLP, and The Village Bank! For those who are not yet members of the Conservators, consider joining us formally this

year and help preserve open space in Newton. You can even help out the Conservators with the shopping you happen to do at Amazon by starting at our Amazon Smile link on our home page at www.newtonconservators.org.

Get outside to our open spaces and enjoy our Garden City at its best!

Events

Sunday, May 10, 8:00 am **Nahanton Park Mother's Day Bird Walk** **Newton Conservators Spring Walk Series**

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. Enter the park 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. Co-sponsored with Friends of Nahanton Park. Trip Leaders: Alison Leary (617-821-5619), Haynes Miller (617-413-2419),



Sunday, May 10 at 2 pm **Newton Aqueducts Hike** **Meet at Waban MBTA Station**



A five mile hike through woods, meadows and fields along the Newton sections of the Sudbury and Cochituate aqueducts. 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. Trip Leader: Henry Finch (617-964-4488).

Saturday, May 16, 8:00 am (Rain Date: Sunday May 17) **Bird Walk at Cold Spring Park** **Newton Conservators Spring Walk Series**

This 67-acre parcel has ample wooded areas, open fields, a brook and wetlands. It is one of the places in Newton where you may hear the call of the Great Horned Owl and observe spectacular songbirds like the rose breasted grosbeak and the indigo bunting. Also frequently found at the park are many favorite migrants such as the red eyed vireo, the wood thrush, and a variety of wood warblers. Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome.



Enter the park at the Beacon Street entrance. Turn left, and go to the far end of the parking lot to meet group. Trip Leader: Pete Gilmore (617-969-1513)

Saturday / Sunday, May 16-17, 12-3 pm
Newton Community Farm - Seedling Sale
303 Nahanton St, Newton

Want to get a head start on growing things. Come to the annual Newton Community Farm Seedling Sale. Bring your own boxes and trays for carrying the seedlings (cash or check only). For more details and list of plants available, check out www.newtoncommunityfarm.org.



Tuesday, May 26, 1:30 pm
Celebrating 300 Years of Farming in Newton
Newton Community Farm, 303 Nahanton St, Newton



From Native Americans to the Angino family, join us as we explore the history behind what is today Newton Community Farm. Weather permitting, we will take a brief tour of the farm to highlight key features that remind us of its unique and fascinating history. You may even have your own stories to add to the discussion! \$15 per person, prepaid registration required. Call 617-916-9655 or visit newtoncommunityfarm.org to register. Co-sponsored by Historic Newton, Newton Community Farm, and the Newton Department of Senior

Services.



Saturday, May 30 at 6:30 am
Boston Greenbelt Walk
Starting in Waban - Ending in Malden

The second annual Boston Greenbelt Walk is a one-day, 32-mile walk from Newton to Malden through parks and lands designated as "open space" or for conservation.. Participants may choose to walk a lesser distance by leaving the event at points along the way but should be prepared to begin walking at either of two starting locations. The walk is planned to maximize the use of public transportation from the beginning to the end - and in between. There are public transit options back to Newton if you want to turn back sooner. The walk is free in celebration of connecting all the great trails around the Greater Boston area. This walk is a coordinated effort organized by many local and regional trail coordinators, the transportation planning group of the [Metropolitan Area Planning Council \(MAPC\)](http://Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)), and the long-distance walking organization, FreeWalkers.

This 32-mile walk will start in Waban, proceed to Riverside, and end in Malden for the hardy. It is sponsored by the Greenbelt Walkers in support of the proposed 90-mile walking trail to circle Boston. Henry Finch, the Newton Conservators' representative on their board, requests that walkers who are interested get additional information from the Greenbelt website: www.bostongreenbeltwalk.org. Trip Leader: Henry Finch (617-964-4488).



The Boston Greenbelt Trail is an MAPC proposed project encompassing approximately 90 mi of

walking trail circling Boston. The trail would connect between Salem and Quincy inside Rt 128, connecting numerous large and small parks and open spaces including Lynn Woods, Breakheart Reservation, Middlesex Fells, Horn Pond, Cummings Park across Lexington, the Western Greenway, and Aqueduct trails. The Greenbelt would also serve as catalyst to preserve some of the remaining undeveloped lands in urbanized Boston as well as to improve conditions for pedestrians along and across busy roadways. The Greenbelt Walk will focus on a 30 mile segment of this corridor

Saturday, June 20, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm (Rain Date, Sunday June 21)
Fern Walk at Webster Woods
Newton Conservators Spring Walk Series

Webster and Cohen Conservation areas and the Reservation form a large wooded expanse that stretches from the shopping malls of Route 9 to Newton Centre. The woods extend on both Hammond Pond Parkway and both sides of the Riverside tracks and are home to 20 species of and related plants. We will visit the southeast near Hammond Pond and see about a dozen ferns. Wear long pants to protect against poison bugs. If you have a hand lens, bring it. Bring any fern you would like to identify. Park and meet near the woods behind the shopping center, between the pond and Hammond Pond Parkway. Trip Leader: Don Lubin, (617-254-8464), <http://nefern.info>



The DCR almost sides of MBTA ferns corner kinds of ivy and native

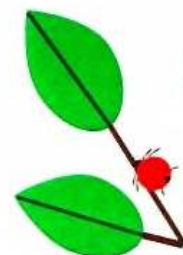


Saturday, June 6
"June Doin"
Celebration for Families at Nahanton Park
Nahanton Park



Everyone is Welcome! Bring your friends and neighbors, too! Come to enjoy this park, which includes riverfront, community garden plots, meadows, wooded hillsides, wild blackberry bushes, wetlands, a pond, and a plateau overlooking the river valley. Enjoy talking with other Conservators and learning from our board members and advisors. Trail Guides and Almanacs will be available for sale. Check out information on the Environmental Science Summer Program. Cookies from Whole Foods and beverages will be available throughout the day. Bring a pick lunch to eat in the Nahanton Park picnic area. All events are free except for canoe and kayak rentals (\$15-20 see www.paddleboston.com for rental info). For more teaks visit NewtonConservators.org or

email president@newtonconservators.org. Mark Your Calendar and check out the schedule of events below!



7:00 am - 8:00 am	Fishing Competition (for kids up to age 16)
7:30 am - 8:30 am	Bird Walk (led by Pete Gilmore)
9:00 am on	Kayak and Canoe Tours at Charles River Canoe and Kayak (rentals)
10:00 am - 11:00 am	Fern Walk (led by Don Lubin)
10:30 am - 11:30 am	Bug / Small Critter Safari (led by Eric Olson)
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Bird Walk (led by Pete Gilmore)
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	Tree Climbing / Tree-Canopy-Check Demo (led by Eric Olson)
11:30 am - 1:00 pm	3.5 mile hike to Cutler Pond (led by Henry Finch)
12:30 am - 1:30 pm	Plant / Nature Walk (led by Eric Olson)
All Day until 2:00 pm	Invasive Plant Pulling Contest
All Day until 2:00 pm	Craft project making recycled flower pots and planting seeds for mini home garden

Thursday, June 18, 2015 7-9 pm (Rain or Shine)
Newton's Conservation Land: A 10-year Vision
Panel discussion with Jennifer Steel, Newton's Environmental Planner
Druker Auditorium, Newton Free Library

Join Jennifer Steel of the City of Newton Conservation Commission for a panel discussion that will showcase Newton's conservation land and lay out a 10-year visioning plan. A Q and A will follow. The program is cosponsored by The Newton Conservators and the Newton Free Library. Come learn about Newton's Conservation land that makes the city green and worthy of the title "Garden City." If you care about the future of Newton's open space, please attend!



Sunday, June 21 (Father's Day)
Tour de Newton



Bicycle Tour of 13 Villages of Newton

Thirteen villages - one community! The annual Tour de Newton is a great event for kids, adults, and casual bicyclists. The ride starts simultaneously in all 13 villages. You'll be riding with your village neighbors and have a trained leader/sweep to guide you. The 20 mile, 13 village fun ride stops at each of Newton's villages, where you'll be welcomed with refreshments, a village badge, and an overview of the village by the locals. Ride the whole 20 mile loop, or just a few villages, whichever you like. It's a great fun way to see and learn about the whole city. Sponsored by Bike Newton. To register visit <http://bikenewton.org/services/tour-de-newton-registration/>

Sunday, June 28, 2015. 2 pm
History of Newton Cemetery: 1855-2015
Commemorating 160 years!
791 Walnut Street, Newton Centre



Ponds, streams, flower gardens, mature trees and planting, green hillsides, groomed lawns and walkways, and the wildlife indigenous to these surroundings characterize Newton Cemetery. The beauty of our properly developed and maintained gardens is enhanced by its design to exude a sense of peace and serenity not found in a typical cemetery setting.

At Newton Cemetery we believe that our garden cemetery is for the living as much as for the deceased (if not more so), surrounding a visitor with natural beauty that soothes the mind, comforts the heart and uplifts the soul. For someone paying respects to a departed loved one, such qualities are invaluable. Visit the Newton Cemetery website at <http://www.newcemcorp.org>. The Newton Conservators have more info on this wonder place at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/cemeterywalk.htm>.

Amazon Customers - Support the Newton Conservators with your purchases!



If you use Amazon to occasionally purchase items, especially during this holiday season, you could be supporting the Newton Conservators at the same time at no extra cost. Simply go to the Newton Conservators home page, www.newtonconservators.org and click on the Amazon Smile link and then continue shopping as normal. 0.5% of your purchase price will be donated to the Newton Conservators to support their open space work.

Newton Conservators Newsletter

Our most recent Spring 2015 newsletter has been published and sent out and is available online as well at http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/15_04.pdf.

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Conservation in Newton: The Conservation Commission

By Jennifer Steel



Newton Conservation Areas from left to right: Flood Meadow, Helen Heyes Reservoir, and Dolan Pond

This story doesn't have a villain bent on destroying a kingdom or a fair maiden in distress, but the story of the evolution of Massachusetts's conservation commissions is an interesting, though an admittedly slow-paced, tale that has unfolded over the past six decades. Commissions have evolved over the years and are now bodies with broad regulatory powers that are a key element in the Commonwealth's framework of protective laws and programs. Indeed, Massachusetts has been at the cutting edge of environmental protection and has engaged its citizens in a rather unique way.

The Commonwealth invented the municipal conservation commission in 1957 with passage of the Conservation Commission Act (MGL Ch. 40B), which authorized each city and town in Massachusetts to establish a locally appointed municipal agency "for the promotion and development of the natural resources and for the protection of watershed resources of said city or town." Specifically, conservation commissions are charged with (1) planning for natural resource protection, (2) coordinating with other groups with similar goals, (3) acquiring important land and water areas (in fee or through restrictions), and (4) managing these properties to "maintain, improve, protect,

limit the future use of or otherwise conserve and properly utilize open spaces in land and water areas within its city or town."

Conservation commissions are made up of volunteer citizens. Some commissions have multiple paid professional staff, some do not have any clerical assistance. Newton has a commission with 7 appointed members, alternate members, and one professional staff member. Newton's Conservation Office is part of the Planning Department (located in the basement level of City Hall). Newton's Senior Environmental Planner, Jennifer Steel, serves as staff to the Conservation Commission and can be reached at (617) 796-1134 or at jsteel@newtonma.gov.

The Newton Conservation Commission meets every three weeks on Thursday evenings beginning at 7:00 pm, usually in Room 204 of City Hall. Conservation Commission meeting dates, agendas, and materials are all available on the Newton Conservation Commission website. At its meetings, the Commission reviews and votes on wetland permit applications, issues of land management, and administrative issues. The Commission welcomes guests and interested members of the public to its meetings.

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Newton Conservators e-Bulletin

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Publications!



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, buy a copy of our Almanac or newly revised Trail Guide, or make a donation to the Newton Conservators online? The Trail Guides and Almanac are also available at your local Newton Bookstores. Shop Local!



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 over 50 years ago (June 1961).

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



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