

Dan Brody

From: websitemgr@newtonconservators.org
Subject: FW: E-Bulletin - December 18, 2015 - Bird Count on Sunday!



Newton Conservators E-Bulletin

Friday, December 18, 2015

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



Happy Holidays!

Most people know that Newton Conservators works to preserve and to protect natural areas in Newton. Our organization always focuses on its core mission: advocating for the preservation of open space and the environment throughout the city. We work to maintain existing areas, and we watch for new land to become available and then work with the city and other organizations to find ways to protect that land. As a member, you can help to make all of that happen—and you learn about what's going on through our newsletters, which contain updates on city projects affecting conservation land, articles about work accomplished by members, birding notes, lists of walks, and much more. The Conservators is an independent nonprofit organization that receives no money from the city or the state. Please renew your membership to help us continue this important work! Current members should have received a renewal letter recently. Otherwise you can join or renew at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/membership.htm>.

We wish you a happy and joyous holiday season and a wonderful 2016! Below are a few upcoming events to get you out and about - beginning with the annual Newton birding census this Sunday.

Sunday, December 20, 7 am Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC)

This year's annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in Newton takes place this Sunday morning. After all, the early birder gets the birds counted! This is the 116th year of the CBC and helps to measure changes in population of our avian species (and perhaps more global trends such as climate change). In Newton, birders will meet at 7 am at the home of Liane Hartnett at 1 Raeburn Terrace in Newton Highlands (Raeburn is



Christmas Bird Count

off Hillside which is off Walnut). Owlers (the real early birds) meet at the same location at 5 am. At 7 am, groups will be formed to go off to various open spaces throughout the city to count all the birds that they see. Beginners are welcome to accompany some of the more experienced birders (bring binoculars and dress warmly). Most of the counting is done in the morning. Tallies are usually made by mid-afternoon and consolidated with tallies from other areas within a 15 mile Greater Boston count circle. Alison Leary (taking a break from her aldermanic duties) is the coordinator for the Newton count as she has done for several years (617-821-5619).

Check out <http://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count> for details on the history of the count and past results. You can also sign up for free to the online American Birds, a FREE quarterly citizen science e-newsletter that contains news from all our citizen science programs: the Christmas Bird Count, Great Backyard Bird Count, and Hummingbirds at Home. It also includes the types of CBC information and summaries previously distributed in the print edition of American Birds. Learn about the birds you might see now at <http://www.massaudubon.org/learn/nature-wildlife/birds/fall-winter-birds>.

Friday, January 1, 2016, 1-3 pm Waltham Land Trust's 11th Annual New Year's Day Walk at Prospect Hill Park

Join our neighboring Land Trust organization for a New Year's walk. Start off the new year healthy and outside trekking up Prospect Hill to Boston Rock. Once at the destination, snacks, hot chocolate, and magnificent views of Waltham and the Boston skyline will be served! Bring your cameras and binoculars! The climb is short but steep; please wear appropriate footwear. Meet at South Gate, near 184 Prospect Hill Road off Main St. in Waltham. For further info contact name Sonja Wadman, swadman@walthamlandtrust.org, 781-893-3355 (WLT).



Saturday, January 9, 2016 Winter Trails Day



Experience the excitement of winter! Winter Trails Day is a national event each January to introduce people to the great fun of getting outside in the winter on cross-country skis or snowshoes. It's perfect for beginners! Locally it will be held at the Weston Ski Track (aka Leo J Martin Golf Course). The event will run from 9am-2pm on

January 9, 2016. To top it off, Mix104.1 will be there playing some tunes and handing out hot chocolate. It'll be an all-around fun time for all ages, so grab your kids, bring your friends, and head on down! All snowshoe events will be free and do not require pre-registration. Everyone will receive a free snowshoeing trail pass, there will be free snowshoe demos, and EMS will be leading free guided tours. Snowshoes will be available from Tubbs and MSR, among others. There will be a limited number of demo snowshoes available; those who want to use snowshoes for more than 15-20 minutes can rent them from us at the regular rate. Free ski lessons will be available with pre-registration and the purchase of a trail pass (and rental if needed). The location is Weston Ski Track, 190 Park Road, Weston, MA 02493. Info at (781) 891-6575, contact@skiboston.com, or www.SkiBoston.com/skitrack/events/specialevents.php.

February 12-15

National Audubon's Great Backyard Bird Count

Bird watchers of all ages count birds in their backyards to create a real-time snapshot of birds that are around this winter. Visit <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/for> details and to register for this fun activity. Who knows - you might even see a Bald Eagle, as many West Newton area residents experienced last year through the winter months!



NEWTON
CONSERVATORS

WINTER ISSUE

NEWSLETTER

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

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An Adventurous Walk Along the Charles: Auburndale to Lower Falls

By Representative Kay Khan

On Saturday, October 17th, Dan Brody from the Newton Conservators and I met at the parking lot on Recreation Road (Exit 23 Northbound only off Route 1-95/128) to lead a walk along the Charles River from the backside of Riverside to Lower Falls. We hoped our walk would spark interest in the condition of existing trails in this area of Newton.

One couple in our group was from Singapore. While visiting family in Newton, they found the announcement of the walk in a copy of the Conservators' Newsletter in the library and decided to join Dan, Jerry Reilly, Chris Steele, me, and several others interested in exploring the area on this picture-perfect fall afternoon.

Our walk included two Newton bridges that were beautifully restored a few years ago—thanks to former Governor Deval Patrick's Accelerated Bridge program and my work with DCR, DOT and many advocates. The first was the old railroad bridge over the Charles in Lower Falls, officially opened in 2012, which connects Newton to Wellesley and its walking trails, and the second was an old pedestrian footbridge behind Riverside,

easily accessible from Recreation Road. (A third bridge close to the Lasell College Boat House on Charles Street in Auburndale will hopefully be done soon, which will be a welcome addition for bikers.)

During the walk, we got a close-up look at both of these restored bridges and followed a proposed route of a walking trail (possibly also a bike trail) that might be completed some day in the future. The walk followed the riverbank into two areas that are not yet widely used and are very rough in spots, so hiking shoes are recommended if you decide to give it a try. Thanks to DCR, young people from Americorps helped with some of the cleanup in the area behind Riverside two summers ago including the painting of the tunnel under the commuter rail connecting to Charles Street. Soon thereafter, the graffiti artists returned it to its previous state.

Now, a little history...

In 1970, when my husband and I bought our house on St. Mary's Street in Newton Lower Falls, we discovered a train track running close to our back yard. One day shortly after moving in with two very young children,



Newton Conservators Charles River Walk

Continued on page 2

Check out the latest edition of the Newton Conservators Newsletter online at http://newtonconservators.org/newsletters/16_01.pdf. Here are a few excerpts from the stories that you will find within:

Winter Owls

by Pete Gilmore

As we drift toward colder temperatures and frozen precipitation, it is nice to realize that looking and listening to birds during the winter in Newton can be pretty exciting. Of course, there is a different cast of avian characters in Newton during the winter, as most of our songbirds have migrated south while some of the more arctic species have come down to our latitude. Great Horned Owls, Barred Owls and Eastern Screech-Owls stay with us throughout the year. Canadian Northern Saw-whet Owls migrate down to us for the winter, while our Northern Saw-whet Owls go farther south for the winter. We, thus, have four owl species with us each winter. . .



more at http://newtonconservators.org/newsletters/16_01_winter_owls.pdf

Riverside Pathway

by Kay Khan



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. more at http://newtonconservators.org/newsletters/16_01_riverside_pathway.pdf

Winter's Coming: What Should We Do About Salt?

by Margaret Doris

It's almost Winter in New England. Time to step up and confront the annual dilemma: what to do about the tons of white stuff piling up on our roads... our sidewalks... the paths to our front doors. No, we're not talking about snow. We're talking about that other white stuff. Salt. . . .



more at http://newtonconservators.org/newsletters/16_01_road_salt.pdf

Climate Change

by Beth Wilkinson



At this time last year, Professor Richard Primack wrote a wonderful article on the effects of climate change on Newton. (You can refresh your memory here: http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/15_01_climate.pdf). His article included the following chart, which shows the areas of Boston that will be vulnerable to flooding as our region experiences more intense storms and a rise in sea level as a result of climate change. Until recently, most of the state government's attention has focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions in order to mitigate those effects as much as possible. . . .

We Must Protect the Miracle of Webster Woods

By Ken Kimmell

Thirteen years ago, my family and I moved to Newton Centre not far from the Webster Conservation land. I can't quite describe what it was like to wake up that first morning, amid boxes and packing crates, and realize that I could walk down the block and step into woods that reminded me of rural New Hampshire—except to say that I felt both astonishment and gratitude. Two blocks in the other direction brought me to the doors of Peet's Coffee. I heard coyotes howl at night as I heard the trolley rumble back and forth on its way to Copley or Riverside. Hawks circled over my backyard as I watched a blimp float toward Fenway Park. How could it be possible, I wondered, to live in the city and live near the woods? What sort of miracle was this?



As I was to discover, it was the same sort of miracle that has given Newton a swimming lake, with a bathhouse and a playground, in the middle of town. In mid-summer, swimmers wave at commuters from the middle of Crystal Lake, floating on their backs while businesspeople riding on the T gaze wistfully from the windows. It was the same sort of miracle that brings children into the villages every Halloween to paint goblins and witches on shop windows and that allows skaters to circle a cove in Auburndale as soon as the river freezes and then change back into their shoes in a warming hut. We are a city of people who value getting outside; we value the environment as part of our daily lives instead of as an abstraction; we value seeing each other. We don't simply live in our houses; we live in Newton.

That first morning, as I walked along the little creek that meanders through woods, I understood my immense good fortune to live in this surprising and lovely city. And I vowed I would do everything possible to make sure everyone else in Newton would always be able to have the experience I was having: walking in the woods in the morning, listening to the birds, watching people stroll by with their dogs on the trails, smelling the leaves and hearing them rustle in the breeze.



That was thirteen years ago; I am as intensely grateful today as I was then. But I am also aware that my vow has now come due. With its pending purchase of property owned by the Mishkan Tefila temple on Hammond Pond Parkway, Boston College soon will own a large wedge of land that bisects the Webster Woods. Without swift action from the city to acquire the undeveloped section of that property, what is now a swath of forestland could turn into pockets of trees. Boston College has not divulged its plans for the property, which does not bode well for Newton residents. I was an environmental lawyer for almost

twenty years before I spent seven years in state government, first as General Counsel for the Secretary of the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and then as the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection. I have seen a heartbreaking number of cases

where wooded land that once seemed protected, and that local residents cherished, turned into shopping malls, residential complexes, and highrise institutional buildings.

We are an old city. We don't have many large undeveloped parcels left. Certainly we don't have many places where we can take a walk and feel far away from the noise, traffic and tensions of urban life-while still being right at home. The chance to spend time in a large and contiguous stand of the woods grows more precious every day. Amid the trees of Webster, the stick forts, the birds, the dog walkers, the cross-country skiers in the winter and the lady slippers in springtime, I see people laughing and talking to each other, children climbing on rocks, elderly couples admiring the changing fall leaves. And here is something I rarely see: people staring at their cell phones.

We are a city that deeply loves its marvelous, unusual, fragile natural beauty. We owe it to ourselves and our children and all future residents, to protect what has, almost miraculously, been provided for us.

http://newtonconservators.org/newsletters/16_01_protect_webster.pdf

What are the natural features which make a township handsome? A river, with its waterfalls and meadows, a lake, a hill, a cliff or individual rocks, a forest, and ancient trees standing singly. Such things are beautiful; they have a high use which dollars and cents never represent. If the inhabitants of a town were wise, they would seek to preserve these things, though at considerable expense; for such things educate more than any hired teachers or preachers, or at any present recognized system of school education. -- Henry David Thoreau



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Newton Conservators e-Bulletin

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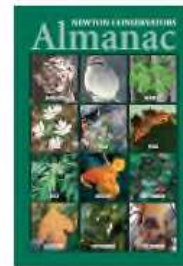
easily downloaded in PDF form at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/>. Event listings for our e-Bulletin can be sent to dolanpond@aol.com.

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 in June 1961.

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



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