



Newton Conservators E-Bulletin

Saturday, January 14, 2017

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



Working to preserve open space
in Newton since 1961

Happy New Year!

Sure it's cold outside (and then it's warm and then it's cold again) but it's still a great time to get out into our open spaces. And there are some great indoor events coming up as well - including a lecture this coming **Wednesday** at the Newton Free Library by Newtonian Ecologist Brooks Mathewson on some of the shy inhabitants of our forest floor (see description below). While we await spring and our own walk series, our calendar includes a few events from other Newton and neighboring like minded organizations. Think you know Newton's open spaces pretty well? Tomorrow, **Sunday, January 15**, is the last day for your entry into our current "Identify That Park" photo contest.

FEATURED EVENT!!



Newton Free Library
The door to your imagination

Wednesday, January 18, 2017 7:00 pm
Druker Auditorium

WOLVES OF THE FOREST FLOOR

Brooks Mathewson, Ecologist
Cosponsored by the Newton Conservators

Participation in ecological research is a tremendous way for students to both engage in inquiry-based learning and develop a deeper appreciation for their local environment. With this in mind, ecologist Brooks Mathewson has been working with schools to set up long-term studies of terrestrial salamanders, the most abundant vertebrates in our forests and excellent indicators of forest health. As top-level predators of the forest floor, salamanders reduce soil decomposition rates through their predation on soil invertebrates, and help to increase the amount of carbon stored in forest soils.



In this talk Brooks will discuss the research he is conducting on terrestrial salamanders at Cabot Woods with the help of students from Newton North High School.

The Newton Free Library is an accessible facility. If you need a reasonable accommodation contact Newton's ADA/Sec. 504 Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting at: jfairley@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1253.

Newton Free Library

330 Homer Street, Newton Centre, MA 02459 • 617-796-1360
www.newtonfreelibrary.net

Wednesday, January 18, 7 pm

Wolves of the Forest Floor

Lecture by Brooks Mathewson, M.F.S - Ecologist, Educator, Photographer
Newton Free Library, 130 Homer Street, Newton



The eastern Hellbender salamander (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis*) is the most abundant vertebrate in healthy forests in the northeast with a biomass twice that of breeding birds.

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http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/16_12_edmands_salamanders.pdf.

Brooks Mathewson is a fine art photographer and ecologist holding a Master's Degree in Liberal Arts with a concentration in Biology and a Master's Degree in Forest Science from Harvard University. Brooks' research has been published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, and he has lectured on songbird migration, breeding bird biology, warbler ecology, and forest ecology at Harvard Forest, the Arnold Arboretum, Holy Cross, the Boston Nature Center, the Newton Free Library, and Ninigret and Sachuest National Wildlife Refuges. His



photography has been published in magazines, scientific journals, textbooks, and field guides, and exhibited and sold at galleries, museums, Audubon Sanctuaries, and National Wildlife Refuges throughout New England. <http://avianartimages.com/>

Calendar

Sunday, January 15
Last Day to "Identify That Park"

Where was this old photograph taken? Think you know where this is? Send an email to newsletter@newtonconservators.org with your best guess. The deadline is Sunday, January 15 and, the winner will receive a FREE One-year membership to the Newton Conservators. If we receive more than one correct entry by January 15, 2017, we'll draw two names from a hat. Good luck and watch for another park photo to identify soon! Hint: it's in Newtonville.



Monday, January 16,
Enrollment opens for Newton Community Farm CSA Shares

Enrollment for NCF's 2017 summer program will open *Monday, January 16th!* Please visit <http://newtoncommunityfarm.org/produce/csa/> to download the enrollment form. Mailing instructions, prices, and other information are included on the form. At the beginning of each growing season, CSA participants purchase a 'share' of the upcoming produce, which helps the farm cover a substantial portion of the costs of our agricultural operations. In return, NCF provides participants with a supply of farm sustainably grown, fresh vegetables and herbs each week throughout the farm season. The farm has the equivalent of 80 weekly shares available. Some of our participants enroll for alternate week shares, which means they pick up produce every other week. Other participants enroll for a weekly share for their family or else they split the full share with another friend or family (or two!). Enrollment is also now open for the "Kids at the Farm" Summer 2017 programs. Experience the beauty and bounty of Newton Community Farm and give summer a whole new meaning! Dig, plant, weed and water. Harvest farm fresh produce and prepare delicious snacks. Feed the chickens, collect eggs and explore the world through the lens of farming and food. Register today at www.newtoncommunityfarm.org/education. To learn more about our summer offerings or scholarship program for qualified applicants, please contact Alison Scorer, Education Director at education@newtoncommunityfarm.org.

A PLACE TO DIG, LEARN, AND GROW



Thursday, January 19, 9:30 am - 11 am
"Edible Wild Plants in and around Weston" by Russ Cohen
First Parish Church, 349 Boston Post Road, Weston, MA

The Weston Garden Club (westongardenclub.org) will host Russ Cohen while he presents "Edible Wild Plants in and around Weston" from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Jan. 19 in the Fellowship Hall at First Parish Church, 349 Boston Post Road. Cohen, a naturalist and wild food enthusiast, grew up in Weston where he spent much of his time in the woods. He was introduced to wild plants in his sophomore year at Weston High School when he enrolled in an edible botany mini-course given by the high school biology department. That began a lifelong passion that he will share in this garden club talk, as he highlights 30 or more species. Recently retired from the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game's Division of Ecological Restoration where he was a rivers advocate, Cohen is currently propagating and planting native edible species. Source: <http://weston.wickedlocal.com/news/20161230/weston-garden-club-to-host-russ-cohen>.



January 21, 2017, 10:00 am - 11:30 am
Annual Duck Walk Along the Charles
Shaw's Parking Lot (back right corner), 130 River Street, Waltham, MA



Join our neighboring organization, the [Waltham Land Trust](http://www.walthamlandtrust.org), on this very popular walk where you will see visiting waterfowl on the Charles River, and many permanent avian residents soaring above it! Between November and March, a variety of birds visit from Canada and elsewhere north to the icy-but-still-moving Charles River. Bring binoculars, or look through one of the scopes



provided, and you'll be amazed to see hooded mergansers, ring necked ducks, golden eyes, ruddy ducks and others. The group will stroll along the paved path that abuts the Charles and look for other wildlife like turtles and bald eagles while pausing at the viewing decks on our way to Moody Street and back. The trail might be icy (it doesn't get treated), so please wear appropriate footwear. Walk is cancelled only if heavy snow is falling. Dress warmly because there is a great deal of standing around. For this reason, children aren't encouraged to attend. Dogs are not

allowed on this walk as they might scare away the birds. Thanks for understanding! Meet in back right corner of Shaw's parking lot, 130 River St. Visit walthamlandtrust.org for more info or contact Sonja Wadman, swadman@walthamlandtrust.org, 781-893-3355 (WLT).

Saturday and Sunday, February 4-5, 11 am - 5 pm
Community Weekend at Historic Newton
Jackson Homestead and Museum and Durant-Kenrick House and Grounds



Newton residents are invited to enjoy free admission to the museums on this super weekend at the Jackson Homestead and Museum, 527 Washington Street and the Durant-Kenrick House and Grounds, 286 Waverley Avenue. Visit the Historic Newton website at <http://www.historicnewton.org/> for info on this and other events or call 617-796-1450.



February 5, 2017, 2 pm - 3:30 pm
The Rail Trail and Sunday Woods
Concord Rd (near Laxfield Rd), Weston, MA

The Weston Forest and Trail Association's trail walk will begin by heading west down the abandoned Mass Central train line right-of-way. A member of the Rail Trail Advisory Committee will tell the story behind this once-active train line between Boston and Northampton, as well as its current status as a "linear park." Return will be via Jericho Town Forest and Sunday Woods, one of the oldest and newest public forest areas in Weston, respectively. Snow may slow the walk down, but it won't deter it. A map and more details about the area can be found on the Weston Forest and Trail Association's website at <http://www.westonforesttrail.org/rail-trail-and-sunday-woods>. You do not have to be a member of the Weston Forest and Trail Association to join the walk. Well behaved dogs are welcome but must be on leash. For more information please contact the walk leader, Joel Angiolillo, telephone 617-721-5946.



Friday, February 17 - Monday, February 20
The Great Backyard Bird Count

Launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the Great Backyard Bird Count was the first online citizen-science project to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real-time. Now, more than 160,000 people of all ages and walks of life worldwide join the four-day count each February to create an annual snapshot of the distribution and abundance of birds. You are invited to participate! For at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, February 17-20, 2017, simply tally the numbers and kinds of birds you see. You can count from any location, anywhere in the world, for as long as you wish! If you're new to the count, or have not participated since before the 2013 merger with eBird, you must [create a free online account](http://www.birdcount.org/) to enter your checklists. If you already have an account, just use the same login name and password. See further information at <http://gbcb.birdcount.org/>.



Speaking of counting birds, Newton's annual bird census, part of the **Greater Boston Christmas Bird Count (CBC)** took place on **Sunday, December 18, 2016**. This was part of an international citizen science effort (this was the 117th count) and similar counts are done around Christmas all over the country and many parts of the world! In Newton, it was snowy the day before, and luckily warm with not as much rain as predicted. Locally coordinated by birder Liane Hartnett, several flocks of hardy birders (including City Councilor Alison Leary!), spread out across Newton to its open spaces and kept track of every bird they found. Overall, some 39 species were tallied comprising some 1214 individual birds. There were lots of calling birds, and even seven swans a-swimming, but alas no partridge in a pear tree! The winner in terms of population was the Canada Goose with large numbers congregating in the Charles River due to our ponds being frozen over. Check out the beautiful sketch below done by Lynn Holbein of the island in a pond at the Newton Cemetery while birding there during the count.

Birds	Count
Canada Goose	374
Mute Swan	7
American Black Duck	2
Mallard	205
Bufflehead	2
Hooded Merganser	5
Wild Turkey	16
Great Blue Heron	1
Red-tailed Hawk	1
Merlin	1
American Coot	1
Ring-Billed Gull	90
Herring Gull	69
Great Black-backed Gull	3
Rock Pigeon	17
Mourning Dove	16
Eastern Screech Owl	5
Belted Kingfisher	2
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1
Downy Woodpecker	12
Blue Jay	23
American Crow	5
Black-Capped Chickadee	36
Tufted Titmouse	11
White Breasted Nuthatch	17
Brown Creeper	1
Carolina Wren	3
Winter Wren	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	2
American Robin	8
Northern Mockingbird	4
European Starling	49
Song Sparrow	7
White-throated Sparrow	6
Dark-eyed Junco	65
Northern Cardinal	12
House Finch	3
American Goldfinch	15
House Sparrow	116
TOTAL	1214
Species	39



Tuesday, February 28

Winter Deadline for Newton Conservators Grant Applications



The Newton Conservators provide grants to Newton's schools, educational institutions, groups, and institutions for the purpose of fostering [its mission](#). The grants are generally modest in size; requests of between \$250 and \$750 may receive priority, although smaller and larger grants will be given full consideration. They can be made for a single event, a longer-term project, or for multiple year funding. Projects for multiple year funding must be reported upon and resubmitted annually. Applications are reviewed and grants are awarded twice a year, with application deadlines of October 31 and February 28. However, proposals may be submitted at any time, and grants are sometimes awarded before the next regular review cycle begins. Find applications and full information online at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/grants.htm>.

Wednesday, May 3

Annual Newton Conservators Dinner Meeting

Mark your calendars for this important annual event with a great speaker and awards! Also watch out for our spring walk and invasive pull schedules several of which will be during Newton Serves day on Sunday, April 30, 2017.

Gypsy and Winter Moth Lecture Now Available on Video



The Winter Moths that hatched around Thanksgiving have disappeared from the air and our outdoor light fixtures for now but will emerge again this coming spring in the form of small

caterpillars munching on our trees. In case you were not able to attend in person on November 21, the wonderful fall lecture on Gypsy and Winter Moths by UMass Amherst Biology Professor, Joe Elkinton, is now available on YouTube in three segments. Learn about these moths and some of the research and studies in controlling them. The lecture was cosponsored with the Newton Tree Conservancy and Green Decade.



Gypsy and Winter Moth Outbreaks in New England - Part 1 - Introduction / Gypsy Moth (34:31)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jExUNpvcM8t-337s>

Gypsy and Winter Moth Outbreaks in New England - Part 2 - Winter Moth (23:31)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FzPQLtFE8t-95t>

Gypsy and Winter Moth Outbreaks in New England - Part 3 - Moth Questions (19:50)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=002Z0FcZnRo>

The Newton Conservators has a YouTube channel at the following link where you can find many of our past lectures and other videos: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCITfS6ijm06DB5eUS2Miv6w>

Newton Conservators Newsletter

The Newton Conservators publishes its newsletter approximately four times a year. It is distributed by mail to the membership and is available online. Extra copies are also available at the Newton Free Library. If you wish to contribute articles or pictures to the newsletter please contact the [newsletter editor](#). Here are some of the must read stories in the latest edition! The latest edition of the Newton Conservators Newsletter can be found online at: http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/16_12.pdf.



NEWSLETTER

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

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Where Have All the Giant Moths Gone?

By Eric Olson, *Snow Lectures in Ecology at Brandeis University*

Even for the most phobic among us, certain butterflies and some moths are so big and so beautiful, they seem to attain the status of honorary birds. These are bugs with a fan base. Monarch butterflies are the rulers of this rarified elite, and for years various wildlife groups have been nominating monarchs to Congress as the National Insect.

As a boy, I was most enamored of the giant silkmoths, with their big caterpillars, showy adults, and common names drawn from the Greek myths, like Polyphemus, Prometheus, Io, Leda. With my maternal grandfather's help, I collected my first Luna Moth from a plate-glass window, and he helped me frame it between glass and a bed of cotton.

I still have it today, 50 years later. Baking my newspaper route in a suburb of Detroit, I would watch for the surprisingly big frass pellets (deer droppings in size) of giant Cecropia Moth caterpillars, and I'd sometimes return with my dad to hunt for them in the branches above. These experiences shaped my future in ways I could not have imagined, for they led eventually to a PhD in ecology and a dissertation on tropical insect dietary ecology. The caterpillar of choice for my field experiments was the Rothschildia Moth, a



Hill Luna Moth at Mt. Mansfield, Day Weekend 2012, Lake Winooski, VT.

giant silkmoth found from Mexico to Brazil.

Unfortunately, New England's silkmoths are no longer as common as they once were, and that means fewer youngsters will share in the delights of raising their caterpillars or discovering the adults below their porch lights on an early summer morning. A number of factors account for the rarity of these insects today, but one in particular – a biological control agent called *Comptosia*, deliberately introduced against Gypsy Moths, may well be the dominant cause. Its story serves as a cautionary tale as entomologists seek to control more recent insect invaders.

The Challenge of Invasive Insects

The story of *Comptosia* needs a bit of context to explain the “why” and “how” of biological control efforts aimed at invasive species like the Gypsy Moths. Many of us are all too familiar with invasive species. Dozens of Conservators and friends have joined in weed-pulls in recent years, aimed at garlic mustard, Japanese knotweed, and other non-native plants encroaching on Newton's open spaces. Go up a step in nature's food chain, though, to invasive insects like Winter Moth and Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, and we

Continued on page 2

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1/15/2017 2:29 PM

Here are some of the great articles contained therein:

- **Where Have All the Giant Moths Gone?**
by Eric Olson
http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/16_12_moths.pdf
- **This Winter, Crossbills?**
by Pete Gilmore
http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/16_12_crossbills.pdf
- **Monitoring the Wolves of the Forest Floor in Edmands Park with Newton North HS**
by Brooks Mathewson
http://newtonconservators.org/newsletters/16_12_edmands_salamanders.pdf
http://newtonconservators.org/newsletters/16_12_MathewsonReference.pdf (tables)
- **The "Envi Sci" Program Turns 50 Next Year!**
by David Backer
http://newtonconservators.org/newsletters/16_12_envi_sci.pdf



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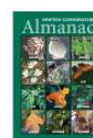
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Membership & Publications!



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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