



**Newton Conservators**

# E-Bulletin

Saturday, December 16, 2017

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



## Happy Holidays!

We wish you a happy and joyous holiday season and a wonderful 2018! A good way to get out and about in Newton this month would be to join us for the annual Newton birding census this Sunday as part of the Greater Boston Christmas Bird Count. See details below.

Most people know that the Newton Conservators organization 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 Newton 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>.

**Sunday, December 20, 7 am  
Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC)  
Meet at 1 Raeburn Terrace, Newton Highlands**

This year's annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in Newton takes place on Sunday morning. After all, the early birder gets the birds counted! This is the 118<sup>th</sup> 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 off Hillside which is off Walnut).



Owlers (the real early birds) meet at the same location at 5 am led by experienced birder Pete Gilmore. For the owling please let Pete know you may be coming at 617-610-2477 so the group could wait in case you are late. The group usually hits a few good spots and tries to call in the owls.

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. The most common question of course is "how do you know you don't count the same bird twice?" Well you can't know for certain but we try our best!

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. You are welcome to join the counting for a short time if you like. Tallies are made by afternoon and consolidated with tallies from other areas within a 15 mile Greater Boston count circle.

Check out <http://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count>

for details on the history of the count and past national results. Your questions about the count can probably be answered at <http://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count>. And for tips on attracting birds over the winter, check out [http://www.audubon.org/news/how-welcome-winter-birds?ms=digital-eng-email-ea-x-20171204\\_winter-birds](http://www.audubon.org/news/how-welcome-winter-birds?ms=digital-eng-email-ea-x-20171204_winter-birds).

You may be surprised at the number of different species that can be found in Newton in December. Here is the tally from last December in order of frequency. Of course these are not all

the birds that were in Newton on last year's count day - just the ones in places that were visited. Reported to Audubon also are how many observers, hours of observation, and miles spent walking or driving while looking for birds - factors which normalize the data a bit.

Hope you can join us - maybe we'll find **7 swans** a swimming just like last year!

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

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**The story of Jolly's Hollow:**  
**How conservation land builds community**  
**by Sarah Luria**  
**Newton Tab, posted Nov 30, 2017**

A wonderful article by Sarah Luria recently appeared in the Newton Tab about Jolly's Hollow, an beautiful but perhaps little known open space close to the Mason Rice school donated by the Wilson family. Read on and discover this charming little Newton spot in this excerpt and link:



*"For years I have cherished the ability to walk off-road along Newton's aqueduct trail from the Four Corners area to Mason-Rice Elementary School. The highlight of that trip, as many lucky aqueduct walkers know, is the winding path*

*through Jolly's Hollow, a secluded dell with a little stone bridge to one side and shaded by gloriously tall healthy trees. Though the path actually runs through private property, for the past many years a charming pair of signs have invited us in: "Welcome to Jolly's Hollow. Please keep to the paths. Beware of the gardener, she talks!" I always wanted to thank that chatty gardener, and would sometimes glimpse her among her gorgeous flower garden and ornamental trees, but I was*

*too shy to tell her how much it meant to me to walk through her beautiful grounds.*

*My wish came partly true the other day, when I met someone planting 50 native low bush blueberry plants under the pine grove near the lip of the hollow where it borders Bracebridge Road. This was André Wilson, who grew up on the property after 1966 when André's father, Harvard physicist Richard Wilson, and mother, Andrée Désirée Wilson, moved there with their six children. (André is transgender and in tribute to Andrée's enabling support has taken and adapted her name.) The elder André was the legendary "gardener" who, during the 50 years she lived there, created this special place. Beginning in the 1990s, as Newton was becoming ever more subdivided, she and Richard began the extraordinary and arduous process that would eventually donate the Wilson Conservation Area to the city and put all but .4 acres of their remaining 1.9-acre parcel under a conservation restriction that protects this legacy in perpetuity."*

To read the rest of the article please visit ...

<http://newton.wickedlocal.com/news/20171130/story-of-jollys-hollow-how-conservation-land-builds-community>

Read more about the Wilson Conservation lands at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/wilson.htm>

## 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. The newsletter is edited by Ken Mallory, with layout by Suzette Barbier, production by Bonnie Carter, and proofing by Doug Leith.

Here is the link to our Fall Newsletter—chock-full of interesting information:

[http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17\\_09.pdf](http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17_09.pdf) and here are links to articles in this issue:

- Newton's Lost Wetlands and Buried Brooks - *Richard Primack*  
[http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17\\_09\\_creeks.pdf](http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17_09_creeks.pdf)
- Dolan Pond Conservation Area - Hidden Gem of West Newton - *Ted Kuklinski*  
[http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17\\_09\\_dolan.pdf](http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17_09_dolan.pdf)
- Along the Greenway - and Beyond! - *Deb Crossley*  
[http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17\\_09\\_greenway.pdf](http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17_09_greenway.pdf)
- The Risky Lives of Birds - *Pete Gilmore*  
[http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17\\_09\\_birds.pdf](http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17_09_birds.pdf)
- Book Review: Half-Earth - E.O. Wilson - *David Backer*  
[http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17\\_09\\_half\\_earth.pdf](http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17_09_half_earth.pdf)
- President's Message - *Beth Wilkinsom* (see below)  
[http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17\\_09\\_president.pdf](http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17_09_president.pdf)
- Fall Walks Schedule  
[http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17\\_09\\_walks.pdf](http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/17_09_walks.pdf)

**NEWTON  
CONSERVATORS**  
FALL ISSUE

# NEWSLETTER

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

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## Newton's Lost Wetlands and Buried Brooks

By Richard B. Primack, a long-time Newton resident and a biology professor at Boston University

**Editor's Note:** This article is an expansion of an article originally written in the *Newton TAB*, August 8, 2017.

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**Until about 120 years ago, Newton was known for its many wet meadows, marshes, and swamps, connected by miles of brooks that emptied into the Charles River. Where did they go? And maybe more importantly, should we bring them back?**

Over the past two centuries, as Newton changed from farming to industry, and then to a Boston suburb, developers and town workers filled in most of our wetlands and buried our brooks in underground culverts or put them into aboveground channels. Water was re-directed to power mills, and wetlands became the sites of playgrounds, schools, other public buildings, and homes.

A drainage map from 1892, available on the city website (<http://www.newtonma.gov/civics/filebank/documents/39235>), shows Newton situated beside a large bend in the Charles River. At that time, Newton's extensive wetlands were drained by three brook systems (Cheesecake, South Meadow, and Hammond/Cold Spring/Laundry) that meandered into the Charles.

**Cheesecake Brook** drains northern Newton, starting in Waban and Auburndale, flowing eastward across the Brae Burn Country Club, along Washington Street, past the Horace Mann School, Day Middle School, and Albemarle Field. In the south, South Meadow Brook begins at Lost Pond, and then flows past Newton South High School and the two middle schools; a second branch begins at Crystal Lake and heads south past Weeks. After the branches meet near Parker Street, the brook heads west toward the Countryside School and then along Needham Street, and enters the Charles at Newton Upper Falls.

Hammond Brook, Cold Spring Brook, and Laundry Brook together form the most

MAP COURTESY OF MATT REEDSCHLEGER

Modified 1892 drainage map showing the main brooks and associated wetlands, with the current position of some schools and village centres and the Newton Library.

*Continued on page 2*



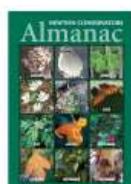
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## Membership & Publications!



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! Our Trail Guide and Almanac make great holiday gifts!



**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](mailto:dolanpond@aol.com))



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