

# Newton Conservators Nature Notes

Tuesday, April 18, 2006

Spring Greetings! This email newsletter provides information on upcoming nature and environmental related events, exhibits, and information in and around the Newton, Massachusetts area. The Community Preservation Act is a hot topic in Newton this week with an aldermanic hearing on Wednesday evening and our Spring Lecture on Thursday. Our Spring Walk Series commences in May. Catch April's Environmental Show and learn how to deal with coyotes, turkeys, and geese that become pesky. We have a new calendar of other events that may be of interest. There is lots of info in this issue, so take time to explore it.

This newsletter is sponsored by the Newton Conservators, the local open space organization in Newton and it also serves as the organization's means of sending out time sensitive information. Please visit our website at <http://www.newtonconservators.org>. Welcome to the many new readers of this free email newsletter. If you wish to be removed from this email list, simply reply with "remove" in the message or subject. (Note: email addresses mentioned in this newsletter substitute (AT) for @ to foil spammers).

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**The Community Preservation Act in Newton - Has It Been Worth It?**  
**Spring 2006 Newton Conservators Lecture**

**Thursday, April 20, 2006, 7 pm**  
**Druker Auditorium, Newton Free Library, 330 Homer Street**

**A Panel Discussion and Pictorial Review of CPA Progress and Projects with Project Leaders, Planners, Committee Members and Aldermanic Representatives**

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) was adopted by the City of Newton in 2001. Since then, over 40 projects involving open space, community housing, historic preservation, and recreation have been approved. In Newton, the CPA Fund comes from a 1% surcharge on the property tax which, to date, has received 100% matching from the state, and whose projects have leveraged additional funding sources. As we near the fifth year since its passage in Newton, there has been increasing debate on the value of the program.

The Newton Conservators Spring Lecture this year will be devoted to a review of the projects that have been implemented with the aid of the CPA Fund. This presentation will provide a review the history of the CPA in Newton, the process by which projects go from proposal to implementation, and the distribution of projects by type, area of the city, and funds allocated. Members of the CPA Committee, the Planning Department, Aldermanic Committees with CPA oversight, and project planners themselves will be provide their perspectives on the program. There will be opportunities for questions on the CPA process and its future.

The bulk of the program will be devoted to a pictorial overview of CPA projects that have been funded in the years since inception in Newton. In its first four years, over 30 acres of open space have been preserved including the last remaining farm in the city and a large tract that connects existing conservation areas. Over 80 units of community housing have been funded, including a Newton Housing Authority apartment building in Waban and the land for the first Habitat for Humanity project in the western suburbs. Our city's three historic burying grounds are receiving badly needed restoration work and recreational improvements for many of our parks and facilities such as Gath Pool are underway.

The free Newton Conservators Lecture Series , now in its fifth year, is cosponsored by the Newton Conservators and the Newton Free Library. The program will take place on Thursday, April 20, starting at 7 PM at the Druker Auditorium at the Newton Free Library. For further information, please visit the Newton Conservators website at [www.newtonconservators.org/lectures.htm](http://www.newtonconservators.org/lectures.htm).

**Programs and Services Aldermanic CPA Hearing**  
**Wednesday, April 19, 2006 - 7:45 pm**  
**Newton City Hall - Aldermanic Chambers**

A joint meeting of several aldermanic committees takes place on Wednesday evening to consider whether the Community Preservation Act should be put on the ballot for reconsideration as we near the 5 year mark of CPA's adoption in Newton. Some believe that the matter should be put to the voters again while others feel that if the system is working well, why jeopardize it? Our understanding is that there will be opportunity for the public to be heard at this hearing. Come to City Hall's aldermanic chamber on the second floor at 7:45 pm on Wednesday evening.

The CPA has been of tremendous good in helping acquire new open space. We were fortunate that a number of preservation opportunities came along since the CPA was adopted. In the 1980's and 1990's there were little resources to acquire open space in Newton and virtually none was added in Newton. Important parcels such as the hillside adjacent to Andover Newton were lost to development. The outcome may have been different with the CPA. Please let your aldermen know how you feel about the value of the CPA to Newton. Contact information for the aldermen can be found on the city's website. Please consider attending this important hearing on Wednesday evening and letting your voice be heard. Information on the activities related to the CPA can be found on the city's website at <http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/planning/cpa/default.asp>.

In particular, you may find last years CPA annual report of interest - <http://www.newtonma.gov/Planning/CPAC/FY05%20CPC%20Annual%20Report.pdf>. Here are some "Fast Facts" from that report:

- Years of CPA in Newton: 4 (enacted November 2001, with funds collected since July 2001)
- Acres of open space preserved under CPA: 32.25
- Units of community housing funded: 81

- Dollars from other sources leveraged with CPA local share funds:
  - \$5.18M from state match
  - \$1.90M more available October 15, 2005
  - Nearly \$11M from other public and private sources
  - \$2 leveraged for every \$1 spent
- Total projects funded to date: 41 (\$11.5M, not including future bond payments)
  - Open space - 6 (\$2.42M)
  - Housing - 10 (\$5.69M)
  - Historic preservation - 13 (\$1.76M)
  - Recreation - 12 (\$1.64M)
- Total CPA funds raised to date: \$12.21M
  - Raised from tax surcharge: \$7.08M
  - Raised from 100% state match: \$5.18M
- CPA funds available for FY2006: \$4.9M

## **Newton Conservators Spring Walk Series**

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 and normally last for an hour or two. These walks (and sometimes bicycle or canoe trips) are a great way to get to know open space areas in Newton. Below is the current walk schedule. A printable version of the walks list is available on the Newton Conservators website at: <http://www.newtonconservators.org/events/walksspring06.pdf>. If you wish to check out the walk list online for updates and photos of some of the walk areas, see <http://www.newtonconservators.org/walks.htm>.

### **Cutler/Millennium/Charles River Loop Sunday, May 7, 2:00 PM**

Starting at Cutler Park, you will explore Cutler Park, Millennium Park and complete the tour by way of the Helen Heyn Riverway. These areas have been improved over the past several years and now provide a wide variety of trails, river landings and playing fields. This is a long walk (2 ½ hours) and the leader has advised that the pace will be brisk and participants should be in sufficiently good shape to keep up with the group. This is early in the spring so hiking boots or heavy all-weather shoes are recommended. Meet at the Cutler Park entrance 1/4-mile south of the Charles River Bridge, on Kendrick Street in Needham. Henry Finch, Newton Conservators board member, will lead the hike.

### **Nahanton Park Mother's Day Bird Walk Sunday, May 14, 7:30 AM**

Woodlands, wetlands and meadows make Nahanton Park a wonderful place to view migratory birds in spring. This annual event of the Newton Conservators is always well received. This is a great program for novice birders who want an introduction, as well as for experienced birders. Bring binoculars, if you have them. Meet at the park's Nature Center building, at the Nahanton Street entrance nearest the river. A parking lot is located at this entrance. The walk will be led by Cris Criscitiello, a Newton Conservators board member.

### **Triangle Weekend Saturday & Sunday, May 20 & 21**

We encourage everyone to participate in the first Triangle Weekend, featuring the 24th Annual Newton House Tour, sponsored by the Newton History Museum (Sunday, Noon-5:00 PM at the Jackson Homestead), and Newton Open Studios (Saturday and Sunday, Noon-6:00 PM, <http://www.newtonopenstudios.com>). The Newton Plant Sale, sponsored by Newton Pride, will be held on Saturday only (9:00 AM-5:00 PM).

### **Aqueduct Tour Sunday May 28, 2:00 PM**

Henry Finch will lead a walking tour of parts of the Sudbury and Cochituate Aqueducts that run through Newton. This walk has grown in popularity over time but it still serves as a way to introduce new and veteran residents of Newton to this wonderful resource. The group leader is an active user of the aqueducts, both as a biker and runner, and is a great source of information about the trail system. You will walk close to backyards, but will also visit pinewoods, meadows and hills. In areas adjacent to backyards, please be respectful of the privacy of homeowners. Meet in front of the Starbucks near the Waban MBTA Station. Call Henry Finch for info.

### **Kennard Park Walk Sunday June 4, 2:00 PM**

A walk along the trails of the Kennard properties, where a 32-acre post-agricultural forest has grown up on 19th century farmland that became an early 20th century gentleman's estate. In the 1980s, the property became a Newton park, adjacent to Brookline's 58-acre Lost Pond reservation. Explore South Meadow Brook, the mixed and conifer woodlands with colonial stone walls, a red maple swamp with century-old trees, and throughout, a wide variety of trees, shrubs, and ferns. Meet at the main entrance at 246 Dudley Road. Trip leader Larry Burdick is a Newton Conservators board member.

### **Charles River Wildflower Walk Saturday, June 10, 10:00 AM**

Carole Smith Berney will lead a Wildflower Walk along the Charles River from Watertown Square to Bridge Street. Walkers will receive a copy of her new Wildflower Guide to the Charles River. The walk will follow the newly completed Charles River Pathway and participants will identify wildflowers found on both the Watertown and Newton sides of the river. Distance is approximately three leisurely miles. Park at the DCR (formerly MDC) parking lot off Pleasant Street in Watertown, adjacent to the Sasaki Landscape Office sign, and meet at the stone pillars on Galen Street. Carole Smith Berney is a photographer and naturalist, who has exhaustively studied and photographed wildlife in this section of the Charles River. Note that this walk is on a Saturday morning and is part of Biodiversity Days in Massachusetts.

### **Angino Farm Tour Sunday June 11, 2:00 PM**

The Angino Farm will be planting its first crops under the direction of Newton Community Farm, which will operate the farm under an arrangement with the city. A tour of the farm and show how Newton's last farm will continue as an active agricultural site to grow organic produce for Newton residents and provide a model for sustainable agricultural and environmental practices. The tour will be led by John Regosin, a founder of the Newton Community Farm and Conservators board member.

### **Charles River Lake District Canoe Trip Sunday, June 18, 2:00 PM**

An almost-annual favorite is the canoe trip through the Charles River Lake District, a mixture of residential, commercial and wetlands. It starts from the Charles River Canoe Service on Commonwealth Avenue and passes Norumbega Park, Fox Island, Auburndale Park, Weirs Cove, the Waltham Watch building, Mount Feake Cemetery, Purgatory Cove and stops just short of the Moody Street dam. These wetlands are well populated with ducks, geese, blue herons and the occasional hawk or egret, so you might want to bring your binoculars. Meet at the Charles River Canoe Service on Commonwealth Avenue in Auburndale. Trip leader is Bill Hagar, current president of the Newton Conservators. Parking is across the river in the parking lot near the Route 95 ramp entrance.

### **Cheesecake Brook & Halloran Field Tour Sunday, June 25, 2:00 PM**

The Cheesecake Brook corridor, with its banks along the brook, and the adjoining recreational and park lands, with a new entrance to the Charles River Pathway over the Blue Heron Bridge, has the potential to become a significant open space and recreational resource if some of the CPA, Community Development and city-funded proposals to improve the area are approved. Curtis Betts, along with representatives of the Newton Conservators and the Newton History Museum, will lead a three-mile tour of recent improvements to the area and will discuss plans for further improvements to the corridor. Meet Curtis Betts of the Friends of Albemarle at the new gazebo that is adjacent to the tot lot at the Horace Mann School.

### **Living With Wildlife in Newton - Part 2 - Practical Tips The Environmental Show on NewTV's Blue Channel - April**

What do you do when a wily coyote visits your backyard? Tennis anyone? Tennis balls thrown at a coyote can be an effective deterrent according to Colleen Olfenbittel, a staff Biologist with the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Or how about discouraging wild turkeys by moving toward them with an open umbrella? Wildlife encounters with coyotes, turkeys, deer, possum, fisher, fox, and geese are becoming increasingly common here in Newton.

April's Environmental Show is Part 2 of Living With Wildlife in Newton, is based on last November's lecture by Colleen Olfenbittel, a staff Biologist with the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. February's show (Part 1) provided some perspective on the phenomenon of why we see more wildlife locally these days. After hunting and the clear cutting of Massachusetts forests for farming led to a decline in animal populations, the regrowth of forests led to a return of many species. Animals find the suburban habitat and available food sources well suited to their needs. The show explained the habits and characteristics of many of the creatures who have adopted Newton as their home. The proximity of wildlife sometimes leads to conflict. April's program (Part 2) deals with practical steps that can be taken by residents to minimize such conflicts and to help residents coexist peacefully with their wildlife neighbors.

Such wildlife encounters are becoming increasingly common in cities such as Newton. In recent years, a bald eagle was spotted feasting on fresh Charles River fish on the same field, an otter was found cavorting in a West Newton swimming pool, a turkey was harassing a postal worker in Newtonville, a wild moose chase occurred in our fair city, and deer, coyote, fox, and even fisher sightings are more common than ever.

The Environmental Show is a volunteer partnership between Newton Conservators and the Green Decade Coalition with each organization presenting on alternate months. Learn to think globally and act locally with the Green Decade Coalition and learn more about your parks with the Conservators!

The Environmental Show is broadcast at eight times weekly for a month duration on the NewTV Blue channel (Comcast Channel 10, RCN Channel 15): The Environmental Show is currently shown on NewTV's Blue Channel ([www.newtv.org](http://www.newtv.org)) on Monday (3 pm), Tuesday (1:30 am, 11:30 pm), Wednesday (11:30 am), Thursday (12 pm, 4 pm, 7:30 pm), and Saturday (10 am). Newton Conservators shows are hosted by Cris Criscitiello and other members of the Conservators. Shows produced by the Green Decade are hosted by Beverly Droz with guests from a variety of environmental organizations and interests.

## Upcoming Events

Below is a time ordered list of events other than our Spring Walk Series that you may find of interest. Please send your listings to [dolanpond\(AT\)aol.com](mailto:dolanpond(AT)aol.com).

### Citizen Pruners Training April 18, 22

Spring is here and so is the pruning season. Consider joining the "Citizen Pruners" program being offered by Marc Welch, Newton's "tree guy" in the forestry department of Parks & Rec. The program started last year, and is continuing this Spring, with the addition of a new group of recruits. There is classroom and hands on training, and then the Citizen Pruners go into action on street and park trees (starting on April 29th). Last year the 20 or so Citizen Pruners vastly improved several areas, and had lots of fun doing it. The skills learned are also very useful on one's own property. The Citizen Pruners will be starting their pruning work again on April 29th and One does not need to attend classes, but if you wish, there are still two classes left (previous classes were on April 4, 11) on Tuesday, April 18, 7-9 pm and on Saturday, April 22, 8 am - Noon. All classes are at the Albemarle Field House. There is also a meeting there on Thursday April 20th at 7:00 pm.

### Waltham Land Trust Third Annual Green Space Blues Jam! Friday, April 21st , 7:30-11 pm

The Third Annual Green Space Blues Jamsponsored by the Waltham Land Trust organization will once again be held at the historic Robert Treat Paine Estate, Stonehurst and feature music by Mike Williams and the Greenspace Jam Allstars. This is a fun, exciting event that also raises important funds to support the work of the Land Trust. Tickets are \$45 for members, \$55 for non-members and includes an open bar, BBQ and vegetarian entrees and ice cream from Lizzy's. Contact Karen Patterson at [kpatters\(AT\)walthamlandtrust.org](mailto:kpatters(AT)walthamlandtrust.org) to order tickets.

## **Flights of Wonder Exhibit at Mass Audubon Visual Arts Center through April 23**

While you may be more familiar with Mass Audubon through their Drumlin Farm facility, you should also be aware of the wonderful Mass Audubon Visual Arts Center, a family-friendly art museum set on a 138-acre wildlife sanctuary in Canton. The Mass Audubon Visual Arts Center is located only 20 minutes from Newton.

Birders take note. Catch their current exhibition called **Flights of Wonder: Paintings by Barry Van Dusen** through this coming weekend. "Perhaps the most essential equipment to bring into the field is a sense of wonder and an open, inquiring mind," says internationally renowned artist Barry Van Dusen. With over 60 watercolors and oil paintings along with sketchbooks and field journals, Flights of Wonder is the largest exhibition ever assembled of Van Dusen's work. Van Dusen is a strong proponent of working directly from life, a practice uncommon among American wildlife artists. While he finds working in the field to be a worthy end in itself, this work also serves as inspiration and reference for more ambitious paintings produced in the studio. Well-known in Europe for his skills as a field artist, over the past ten years Van Dusen has worked with other nature artists in Ireland, Spain, India and Peru on projects sponsored by the Artists for Nature Foundation (ANF). Some paintings from these trips are included in the exhibition. Based in the Netherlands, ANF focuses international attention on wildlife conservation by bringing artists together to work in endangered habitats. Van Dusen credits these trips with deepening his commitment to fieldwork. See

[https://www.massaudubon.org/Nature\\_Connection/Sanctuaries/Visual\\_Arts/current\\_exhibit.php](https://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/Sanctuaries/Visual_Arts/current_exhibit.php) for complete details.

The Visual Arts Center has a full array of spring programs including drawing, painting and photography, as well as children's programs for April school vacation week and summer vacation, too. The Visual Arts Center is part of Mass Audubon, the first Audubon society and the largest conservation organization in New England. They present three changing exhibitions each year of work by nationally and internationally recognized artists inspired by nature, and they offer programs integrating art and nature for all ages. Amy Montague, the director of the Visual Arts Center, is coincidentally a member of the Newton Conservators member and a Newton resident. More information can be found on their website at

[https://www.massaudubon.org/Nature\\_Connection/Sanctuaries/Visual\\_Arts/index.php](https://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/Sanctuaries/Visual_Arts/index.php). And of course, a huge repository of nature related events can be found at <http://www.massaudubon.org>.

## **"Save CDBG" Rally Monday April 24, 4 pm - War Memorial Steps at Newton City Hall**

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program has done a tremendous amount of good in Newton over past years in human services, housing, parks, and handicapped accessibility. Join Rep. Barney Frank, Mayor David Cohen and Newton human service agencies to combat the devastating cuts to this vital program that brings in \$2.3 million of annual federal funding to Newton. A rally is being held on Monday, April 24 at 4 pm on the War Memorial steps at Newton City Hall. In case of inclement weather, the rally will be held inside the War Memorial Auditorium. There is also a postcard campaign to let government officials know of the importance of this program. If you have enjoyed the boardwalk at Dolan Pond you have enjoyed some of the benefits of CDBG! You can download a flyer on this event at <http://www.newtonma.gov/Planning/Save-CDBG-Flyer.pdf>.

## **"Earth Day: Innovative Environmental Projects in Newton Schools" Green Decade's Environmental Speaker Series Monday, April 24, 7-9 pm, Newton Free Library, Druker Auditorium.**

Come hear guest speakers of all ages talk about our Newton schools' environmental programs. Kids from elementary, middle and high schools are doing interactive sustainable projects in the schools. Find out what they have to teach us and how our teachers are inspiring their students with interdisciplinary environmental education. Learn how each school at all levels has its own unique process for students, teachers and custodians recycling materials that otherwise would be thrown away at a cost of \$130 per ton. The more paper the kids and schools recycle the less money the City has to pay for trash disposal! Co-sponsored by the Green Decade Coalition/Newton with the Newton Free Library. For more information contact <http://greendecade.org>.

**Greening the Garden City: Gala 15th Anniversary Celebration and Fundraiser for Green Decade  
Saturday, April 29, 7-10 pm, New Art Center**

The Green Decade Coalition/Newton will celebrate its 15th anniversary with a special event, "Greening the Garden City", on Saturday, April 29 from 7-10 pm, at the New Art Center, 61 Washington Park, Newtonville. The event will honor Beverly Droz, president from 2000-2005 and will include a silent auction and live music by Juliet Lloyd. \$25 per person in advance, \$30 at the door. All proceeds will benefit the Green Decade in our quest to improve Newton's environmental performance and educate Newton residents about environmental solutions. Many wonderful items and services have already been donated, and we still need more! For more information about this event and to see a list of donations to date - and to place your bid online -- visit <http://greendecade.org>.

**Hemlock Gorge Annual Spring Spruce-up  
Saturday, April 29, 10 am - Noon**

Join the Friends of Hemlock Gorge for their annual Spring spruce-up in Newton, Needham & Wellesley on Saturday, April 29, 10 am-12 noon. For more information visit <http://www.hemlockgorge.org/> or download a flyer at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/hemlockflyer.pdf>.

**Earth Day Charles River Cleanup  
Saturday, April 29, 9 am-Noon**

Join the Charles River Watershed Association and more than 1,000 volunteers from numerous communities, universities, civic groups and businesses for the largest river cleanup hosted every year along the Charles River, the seventh annual Earth Day Charles River cleanup, on Saturday, April 29, from 9 a.m. noon. Volunteers make a difference in the health and beauty of the river by picking up trash at numerous sites along the 80-mile river from Milford to Boston. To establish a local site or for more information, visit <http://www.charlesriver.org> or call Marianna Hagbloom of Massachusetts Community Water Watch at [massart\(AT\)waterwatchonline.org](mailto:massart(AT)waterwatchonline.org). Other event organizers include Massachusetts Community Water Watch, state Sen. Steven Tolman's Office, Charles River Stream Team, Charles River Conservancy and Esplanade Association. All volunteers will receive T-shirts and lunch. Find more info at <http://www.crwa.org>

**NewtonSERVES  
Sunday, April 30**

NewtonSERVES is a day of community service -- bringing together up to 1,000 volunteers (ages 8 and up) to complete tasks that benefit over 40 local non-profit agencies and the City of Newton. It's the City's servathon and a great way to make our community better! Volunteers work in teams and are assigned to pre-arranged Project Sites throughout the City. Teams are led by a Team Leader and supervised by a Project Leader at the site. Volunteers pre-register so they can be matched to a Project Site. You can register as an individual, family, or small group - and we'll assign you to a Team. You can form your own Team from your neighbors, friends, religious institution, school, business, club, etc.! There are all-day and half-day projects. Most take place outdoors, and some indoors. This year's event will take place on Sunday, April 30, 2006. For more info, contact Beverly Droz, Director.

Park cleanups are scheduled for Norumbega, Cold Springs, Edmonds Park, Albemarl, Richardson Field, Charles River Walkway, Wellington Park, and others. Consider helping to wake up your favorite park for the spring.

Project & Team Leaders are needed to sign up now for Newton's 6th annual NewtonSERVES Day of Community Service to be held Sunday, April 30, 2006. There are 55 Project sites around Newton to accommodate 1,000 volunteers. Examples of organized projects include: spring clean-up of parks and agencies' grounds, projects at neighborhood schools, working at seniors' facilities and agencies that serve the developmentally disabled, helping with a recycling swap & shop, making art cards for elders. As a Project Leader, you'll complete a 1/2 hour site-visit at your assigned Project site, communicate details back to us, and help direct volunteer work on the day of the event. As a Team Leader, you'll communicate details to your team during the week before April 30 and help oversee their volunteer work at the event.

Any one can organize a Team of volunteers through your business, church, club, school or temple. Or we can assign volunteers who register to you! Pre-registration is required and is open now. Visit <http://www.newtonma.gov/newtonserves> to view the list of projects and register online. Registration Brochures are available at the City Hall front desk, in the Library. To sign-up as a Leader, or request a brochure, contact NewtonSERVES immediately.

### **CRWA's Run of the Charles Sunday, April 30**

Volunteers find themselves in the thick of the action at the Run of the Charles Canoe and Kayak Race which annually attracts thousands of paddlers and spectators. The 24th annual race, set for Sunday, April 30, is a benefit for the Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA). Volunteers are still needed! For more information or to register, please call 508-698-6810, email [rotc\(AT\)crwa.org](mailto:rotc(AT)crwa.org) or visit <http://www.crwa.org>.

### **Annual Plant & Garden Sale to Benefit Green Decade Programs Saturday, May 13 -- 9:30 am to 12:30 pm**

Come to the Annual Plant & Garden Sale to Benefit Green Decade Programs at 10 Lindbergh Avenue, West Newton (off Waltham St., 3 blocks from Washington St.). At the home of GDC Outreach & Program Coordinator Margaret Ford, this event features free advice from expert gardeners. All kinds of plants available for sale, and it benefits the Green Decade Coalition/Newton's environmental education programs. One way you can contribute is to provide plant donations: annuals, perennials, ground cover, vines, seeds, tree & shrub seedlings, organic fertilizer plus decorative items such as flower pots, baskets & more! Please drop off donations the week of May 8-12 to above address. Place plants on the left side of the driveway (it is a shared driveway!). Tables will be set up to receive your donations. All plant donations must be labeled but do not have to be in containers. They also need volunteers to help pot the plants on Thursday and Friday, and to help at the sale on Saturday. For more information, e-mail to [info\(AT\)greendecade.org](mailto:info(AT)greendecade.org).

### **Newton "not just a" Plant Sale - Saturday, May 20, 9 am - 5 pm**

The Newton Mayor's Office for Cultural Affairs and the Newton Pride Committee present the Newton "not just a" Plant Sale on Saturday, May 20 from 9 am to 5 pm at Newton City Hall grounds. The sale features twice as many plants as last year, shade loving varieties, Japanese maples in easy to transport pots, fall blooming bulbs, designer hanging baskets, free lectures and demonstrations, fabulous raffle prizes, and expert sales teams to help with your selection. Picnic tables, lunch, and beverages will be available. The Newton Plant Sale is a project of the non-profit Newton Pride Committee, supported by the Mayor's Office for Cultural Affairs, Arts in the Parks and Newton Parks and Recreation Department. Proceeds support citywide community activities.

### **24th Annual Newton Historical Society House Tour Sunday, May 21, Noon to 5 pm.**

Newton is home to some of the finest examples of nineteenth and early twentieth-century domestic architecture in America. The annual House Tour is a spring tradition that celebrates this distinctive heritage and showcases unique Newton homes to benefit the Newton History Museum at The Jackson Homestead. This year's tour features eight private homes from Newton's historic neighborhoods, including Auburndale, Chestnut Hill, Newton Centre, Newtonville, Waban, and West Newton. Tickets purchased through May 19 are available at a discounted rate. For advance ticket sales, call the Museum at 617-796-1450.

Volunteers are needed to work at the homes on the day of the tour during one shift, from either noon to 2:30 p.m. or 2:30 to 5 p.m. Duties include providing general assistance and information to tour-goers. Volunteers receive a free House Tour ticket to visit the homes during their off-shift. To volunteer for the 2006 House Tour, to make reservations, or for more information, call the Newton History Museum at 617- 796-1450.

### **"Is Your Home Healthy and Energy Efficient?" with Barbra Batshalom Green Decade's Environmental Speaker Series**

## Monday, May 22, 7-9 PM, Newton Free Library, Druker Auditorium.

Join Barbra Batshalom, Executive Director of the Green Roundtable, for this free informational session about renovation and new construction, green building strategies, and resources available. Topics will include: Overview of issues in the average home related to energy loss, water efficiency, indoor air quality, ventilation, moisture intrusion and maintenance, recommendations for site and landscape design and maintenance, water recovery/reuse and conservation techniques, material and product selection and installation for healthy, durable interiors, energy efficiency strategies for short and long term investments, and suggestions for how to engage architects, contractors and realtors to address these issues. For more information contact <http://greendecade.org>.

## EcoAlert from American P.I.E. - Walk on the Wild Side

For Earth Day, April 22nd, American PIE suggests a simple gesture to honor Mother Earth: take a walk. Transplanted from the world of electronics, concrete and plastic, walk a path less traveled. Be aware of the sound of your feet, be aware of the soil of Earth under your feet. Walking instead of driving your car will benefit the environment and your health. American PIE can benefit, too, if you walk on the wild side with a walking stick from Molly Wild.

Walking, leaving our footprints, is an excellent method for raising awareness of our impact on Earth. According to the Earth Day Network, a nonprofit coordinating body of worldwide Earth Day activities, humanity's collective ecological footprint is 30% larger than what the world can offer. This means we are overusing the planet and liquidating its ecological assets. Examples of overuse include deforestation, collapsing fisheries, and the build-up of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere. At the same time, a significant percentage of the world's people do not have enough resources to meet basic survival needs.

You can find out how your personal footprint measures up by using an interesting tool, the Ecological Footprint Quiz at <http://www.earthday.org/footprint/index.asp>. The Quiz, 15 easy questions, estimates how much productive land and water you need to support what you use and what you discard. This website also provides tips for reducing your ecological shoe size and your personal impact on the planet.

During the early part of the Ice Age, some three million years ago, humans probably first walked on Earth. Oldest remains have been found at various sites, notably in sediments from the Rift Valleys of East Africa in Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia. Since then, the footprint of humankind has spread over virtually the entire land surface of the planet. Thoughtful persons recognize the accompanying transformation of the environment by human actions. The impact of the human footstep on Mother Earth, especially in the modern era, has been anything but gentle. Awareness of our impact is an essential step for us as individuals. Awareness can lead to desperately needed, broadly based public support for vigorous and comprehensive action - at all levels of government - to prevent environmental degradation. Awareness can begin this Earth Day by simply taking a walk...on the wild side.

Act on this EcoAlert, and thank you for your environmental responsibility.

This feature is courtesy of American P.I.E. , Public Information on the Environment, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, P.O. Box 676, Northfield, MN 55057-0676, Telephone: 1-800-320-APIE(2743); fax 507-645-5724, E-mail: [Info\(AT\)AmericanPIE.org](mailto:Info(AT)AmericanPIE.org).

## Notes of Interest

The **Environment Page** is a monthly feature of the Newton TAB dedicated to providing vital current information about environmental science, policy and local conservation activities. For more information, also see <http://greendecade.org>.

The **Newton History Museum at The Jackson Homestead** (527 Washington Street) always has interesting programs. As part of their community commitment, they are happy to send you this listing of program highlights, events, and invitations each month. You may register for programs by telephone at 617-796-1450. For more details about any of our programs, please visit our website at [www.newtonhistorymuseum.org](http://www.newtonhistorymuseum.org).

Thanks to all those who supported the city's acquisition of **Angino Farm**. Shares for this initial year have all been

allocated under the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model. Check out the latest info on our local farm at <http://www.newtoncommunityfarm.org>.

For over 35 years, "Envi Sci" has been an alternative to traditional summer camps. The **Environmental Science Program** (<http://www.newtonenvisci.org/>) centers around the idea that students learn best about their surroundings when taught by other students in the specific environment. Leaders are trained to educate students while daily hiking or biking to many diverse sites in Newton and surrounding areas.

You can visit the **Mass Wildlife** website at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/land-use-habitats/>. Subscribe to MassWildlife News, a free electronic monthly newsletter updating you on research, events, new laws and other agency activities. All you need to do is send an email to: [Join-MassWildlife.news\(AT\)listserv.state.ma.us](mailto:Join-MassWildlife.news(AT)listserv.state.ma.us)

If you are a Newton dog person, check out the newly revamped website of **NewtonDogs** organization at <http://www.newtondogs.org>.

Check out **Nature Events** in nearby communities and organizations by checking out the Links page of the Newton Conservators website at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/links.htm>. Check out Brookline at <http://www.brooklinegreenspace.org/>, Weston at <http://www.westonforesttrail.org/>, Waltham at <http://www.walthamlandtrust.org/index.html>, Wellesley at <http://www.wellesleyconservationcouncil.org/> and Watertown at <http://www.watertowncitizens.org/>

## Newton Conservators Activities

The **Newton Conservators Newsletter** is the official publication of the Newton Conservators and may be found online at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletter.htm>. The latest issue is in the mail and if you are a Newton Conservators member should be receiving it in the near future.

The **Newton Conservators Annual Dinner** will take place this year on **Wednesday, May 31st** at **American Legion Post 440**, 295 California Street in Nonantum. Watch for more details in our next Nature Notes on speakers and awards to be given. The **Board of Directors** of the Newton Conservators meets monthly usually on the third Wednesday of the month (usually at City Hall). Members are welcome to attend. If you wish to attend you can contact us to confirm the date, time, location, and agenda. The April meeting will take place on **Wed.. April 19**, 7:15 pm at the City Hall Cafeteria (basement level) and will be abbreviated so that board members can attend the CPA hearing in the aldermanic chambers. The Newton Conservators have an active **Land Management Group** led by Landscape Designer, Beth Schroeder. Each week, usually on Tuesdays, the group visits one of our open space areas to catalog the flowers, plants, animals, and other creatures that are found there. If you are experience and knowledgeable in the areas of nature related identification, please let us know if you would like to assist in this long term effort to catalog the biodiversity in Newton.

The **Walking Trails in Newton's Park and Conservation Lands** map guide put out by the Newton Conservators is a great resource for those who would like to explore Newton's open space. It is a 56-page guide containing detailed trail maps of 27 conservation areas in Newton, featuring parks, ponds, gardens, trails, canoe launches, nature guides, rock climbing, scenic views, handicapped access, geological features, and bird watching areas. The guide also contains photos, driving directions, interesting historical details, and an overall map of showing the locations of the 27 natural. Many more folks have been observed out in our conservation areas with their trail guide in hand;. It is available by web, mail and also at Newtonville Books and New England Mobile Book Fair. Walking Trails in Newton's Parks and Conservation Lands may be purchased for \$7.95 online at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/buyaguide.htm> or by mailing a check to The Newton Conservators, P.O. Box 590011, Newton Center, MA 02459. It makes a great gift for your outdoors and nature loving friends.

**About the Newton Conservators** This email newsletter is sponsored by the Newton Conservators, a local organization The Newton Conservators, a nonprofit citizen advocacy organization which actively promotes the acquisition, creation, and preservation of natural open spaces for the people of Newton. Since its formation in the late 1950's, The Newton Conservators has been instrumental in safeguarding more than 200 acres of open space in Newton, creating several major public parks, and enacting ground-breaking environmental ordinances with respect to the protection and preservation of trees, wetlands and clean air, and the conservation of energy. that promotes the protection and preservation of natural areas, including parks, park lands, playgrounds, forests and streams, which are open or may be converted to open spaces for the enjoyment and benefit of the people of the City of Newton, Massachusetts for scientific study, education, and recreation. It further aims to disseminate information about these and other environmental matters. A primary goal is to foster the acquisition of land and

other facilities to be used for the encouragement of scientific, recreational, educational, literary, and the other public pursuits that will promote good citizenship and the general welfare in the City of Newton. Please visit our website at <http://www.newtonconservators.org> or contact us at the address below. If you would like to join the Newton Conservators, please send your name, address, phone and email address (if you wish email alerts) to The Newton Conservators, P.O. Box 590011, Newton Centre, MA 02459. Membership Options are the following: Individual \$25, Family Member \$35, Sustaining Member \$50, Donor \$75, Patron \$100. Membership is tax deductible. Your membership includes the Newton Conservators Newsletter and emails and invitations to participate in guided tours of local conservation areas, lectures, and other programs and activities. You will also receive by mail a copy of the new Newton Conservators open space map book, "Walking Trails in Newton's Park and Conservation Lands".

**About Newton Conservators Nature Notes** If you would like to be more directly kept apprised of future nature related events, walks, lectures, and exhibits, you are invited to join the Newton Conservators sponsored "Newton Conservators Nature Notes" email list by sending an email request to [emaillist\(AT\)newtonconservators.org](mailto:emaillist(AT)newtonconservators.org) or contacting Ted Kuklinski. Newton Conservators Nature Notes is automatically sent to members of the Newton Conservators who provide their email addresses as one of their membership benefits. Newton Conservators Nature Notes may be found online at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/naturenotes.htm>. You are welcome to submit any items for this sporadic newsletter via email to the same address. Please feel free to forward our newsletter to others you feel might be interested in the information contained herein.