

# Newton Conservators Nature Notes

Friday, June 9, 2006

Greetings! This email newsletter provides information on upcoming nature and environmental related events, exhibits, and information in and around the Newton, Massachusetts area. Tonight you can catch a special showing and panel discussion of "An Inconvenient Truth" at the Coolidge Corner Theater. The Newton Conservators still have a few events in their Spring Walk Series including a Wildflower Walk on Saturday, June 10 at 10 am where you can get a free wildflower guide. Catch June's Environmental Show and learn about the wonderful Aqueduct systems in Newton. Find out what's been growing at Angino Farm lately. There is lots of more information 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. 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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## Tonight: A Special Showing and Panel Discussion of Al Gores' An Inconvenient Truth June 9th - 7:00 pm showing, 8:45 pm panel discussion, Coolidge Corner Theatre.

Join Brookline GreenSpace Alliance and the Coolidge Corner Theatre for Al Gore's highly acclaimed *An Inconvenient Truth*, a documentary by Davis Guggenheim on the planet-wide crisis of Global Warming as part of the Muddy River Film Series. Following the showing of the film, stay for the panel discussion led by Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and author of *Boiling Point*, Ross Gelbspan, Alexander Agassiz, Professor of Biological Oceanography at Harvard and co-chair of the second working group of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), James McCarthy; environmental reporter at The Boston Globe, Beth Daley, and chairman of Climate Change Action Brookline, Deirdre Buckley.

This panel discussion has been rescheduled from the original June 2nd date due to unforeseen circumstances. Tickets from June 2nd will be honored but need to be traded for new tickets preceding the event by either calling the Coolidge Corner Theatre box office at 617-734-

2501, option 0, or visiting the box office. All other individuals who wish to attend can purchase tickets at [www.coolidge.org](http://www.coolidge.org) or by visiting the box office.

If you miss this tonight, of course you can catch this important film at many local theaters including the Embassy in Waltham. Check newspapers for listings.

## **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/walkspring06.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>.

### **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. As a special treat, walkers will receive a copy of her new Wildflower Guide to the Charles River (see description elsewhere in this newsletter). The walk will follow the 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. Alternatively, there is usually parking on the south side of the river where one could walk across the footbridge near the falls.

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 partly in celebration of Biodiversity Days in Massachusetts.

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

The Angino Farm has planted 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 will 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.

## **New Wildflower Guide to the Charles River**

A new handy and compact book on local wildflowers has been published. Its official title is ***Wildflowers Near the Charles River - Along the Greenway Path in Watertown, Newton and Waltham: An Identification Guide for Walkers*** by Carole Smith Berney and Patsy Murray. The publication was supported in part by a grant from the Watertown Cultural Council, the Watertown Savings Bank, and by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR, formerly known as the MDC).

It's in a size similar to the Conservators trail guide and easily fits in a back pocket for reference on your walks in the wilds of Newton. The guide covers almost 50 of the most common wildflowers you might find with a color photo and narrative description each. The flowers are arranged in the book by color and there is a handy index on the back page. The purpose was to acquaint folks with the wildflowers seen most commonly along the Charles River Greenway Corridor, and not really to provide a definitive horticultural field guide. A handy reference list of other more detailed recommended publications on wildflowers is provided.

You may recall Carole Smith Berney's Newton Conservators lecture in the Fall of 2004 and subsequent episode of the Environmental Show (April 2005) on NewTV entitled *Flora and Fauna of the Charles River*. Some of her outstanding nature photography the lecture and her photo exhibitions are featured in the book.

Carole Smith Berney and Patsy Murray met by chance while walking the Charles River Pathway and stopped to talk, marveling at the large variety of wildflowers unfolding during the seasons, but wishing they knew more about them. They were encouraged in the endeavor by Dan Driscoll, the forward thinking DCR planner responsible for the Charles River Greenway. The DCR office can be reached at 617-626-1250.

The Newton Conservators (along with the Charles River Watershed Association) are some organizations selected to help with distributing this handy free guide to interested citizens. Carole Smith Berney was a guest at the recent Newton Conservators Annual Dinner and copies were distributed to those who attended. Copies were to also be available on remaining Spring walks including the special Wildflower walk led by Carole on Saturday, June 10.

## **Watch the June Environmental Show on NewTV's Blue Channel: Preserving Newton's Historic Green Aqueduct Pathways**

The June episode of The Environmental Show on NewTV takes viewers on a tour of Newton's Aqueduct pathways, highlighting both their special joys and the need to preserve these beautiful greenways for future generations. The show is produced by the Newton Conservators.

Beautiful footage shows where the paths begin along the Charles River and run through Waban and Newton Highlands to the Newton Center Playground. Host Cris Criscitiello points out the wildflowers, trees and birds along the way. Engineer Frank Steiger explains how the huge aqueduct pipes originally brought water into the city, dropping six inches a mile because they used only gravity, no pumps. Doug Dickson, a past president of the Newton Conservators and a member of the Newton Conservation Commission explains efforts to maintain and preserve these pathways. Henry Finch, who has frequently given tours of these pathways for the Newton Conservators, explains the ins and outs of several areas along the way.

Be sure to catch this episode of the Environmental Show running repeatedly through the month of June on Saturdays (10 a.m.), Mondays (3 p.m.), Tuesdays (1:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.), Wednesdays (11:30 a.m.) and Thursdays noon, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.). It will be shown on NewTV's Blue Channel, which is Channel 10 for Comcast subscribers and Channel 15 for RCN subscribers. This month's NewTV production includes video and photos by the team of Duane Hillis, Frank Howard and Dan Brody, and Editor Patricia Goldman.

The Environmental Show recently was honored at NewTV's Red Carpet Awards in the category of Field Production - Community Impact for their two part series on the Charles River - *Flora and Fauna of the Charles River* (April 2005) and *Appreciating the Charles River* (June 2005). The Conservators Environmental Show NewTV team consists of Duane Hillis, Patricia Goldman, Frank Howard, Cris Criscitiello, and Ted Kuklinski.

## News from Angino Farm

We pass along this letter from Newton Community Farmer, Greg Maslowe concerning all the great happenings and progress at the farm lately.

*Dear Farm Supporters,*

*Those of you who have driven by the Farm know that things are happening. In addition to having our spring and first round of summer crops in the ground I thought I'd give everyone an update on some of the other exciting things taking place at the Farm:*

*1) Our Williams College Intern, Liz Gleason, started this past week. She'll be working with me (Greg) in the field part of the time and spending one day per week at City Sprouts, a school gardening program in Cambridge that not only gets students growing food, but then brings that food into the schools' cafeterias to provide fresh, nutritious produce to the students. Her main task will be to work with me and the Board of Newton Community Farm to develop educational programming for the Farm. This will include working with representatives of the Bowen School on a pilot farm curriculum that will serve as a model program to be expanded to other Newton public schools.*

*2) We held our first educational program, as Brimmer and May brought 25-30 7th graders for a morning visit. Liz and I gave the students a tour of the farm operation, highlighting the history of the farm as well as benefits of local, sustainable food production. After the tour the students helped lay out beds, mulch paths, transplant tomatoes, spread compost on the rhubarb and asparagus, and other projects in the greenhouse. Our next programming event will take place in July when another group of around 25 students studying environmental science comes to the farm for a work day.*

*3) The Board of Aldermen approved funding for de-leading the farm house. The specs have been written for the work, and it should go out to bid this week. The tentative completion date for the work is August 15! Thank you to the Aldermen, and everyone else, who worked so hard to get this funding approved in record time.*

*4) The apple trees, which were pruned for the first time in many years and then ravaged by Winter Moths, are showing signs of recovery. Likewise, the historic grapevines that we pruned hard to allow access for construction of the greenhouse have leafed out and are looking good.*

*5) Perennial crop planting is well underway. The raspberry patch is planted, as is the asparagus. The blueberries arrived the other day and will be planted in the coming week. These crops, and other permanent plantings, will provide the Farm with produce for the next 25-30 years!*

*6) We are beginning to develop our volunteer network. We have a half dozen people who have already become regular volunteers on the farm. In addition, we've had over two dozen volunteers lend a hand at one time or another over the spring. Volunteers are crucial to the success of the Farm. Thank you to those of you who have already come by, and I'm looking forward to meeting, and working with, many more of you. We are currently looking for a Volunteer Coordinator to help organize work events. If you're interested in serving in this vital role, please contact me or one of the Board members. Anyone interested in volunteering is, of course, welcome. The best way to volunteer is to call me at least a day or two in advance to inquire about the upcoming work schedule. Even on rainy days there is work to be done in the greenhouse, or in the barn preparing it for the opening of the farm stand.*

*7) There have been a number of supportive articles on the Farm in the Newton Tab. I was contacted just today by a writer for the Tab who is interested in writing another story: this one following the life of a vegetable from the day it is planted to the day it is eaten. The author is especially interested in following a plant planted by a volunteer, so stop by and you might just become famous!*

*8) Finally, I thought I'd give a run down of some of what's been planted for those who haven't had a chance to stop by the Farm yet:*

*spinach, arugula, mustard greens, lettuce, radishes, shelling peas, snap peas, leeks, scallions, onions, parsley, cilantro, tomatoes, zucchini, cucumbers, carrots, beets, Swiss chard, and bush beans*

*There's lots more in the greenhouse waiting to be transplanted in the next couple of weeks. I encourage you to stop by and see all the exciting things taking place.*

*Greg Maslowe  
Farm Manager  
Newton Angino Community Farm  
(gmaslowe(AT)bu.edu)*

## Spring at Dolan Pond

by Ted Kuklinski

Spring at Dolan Pond is a magical time with the transformation from cold and leafless to lush and verdant. The process happens so gradually with plants appearing and unfurling and birds returning and passing through. Even a dandelion's earlier than usual appearance in April is cause for celebration. The ferns unrolling themselves is always a fascinating spectacle.

For me, in mid March the restlessness begins. A few warmer than average days call out for a visit. Some years, the squeaky gate sound of the rusty blackbird can be heard along with the chatty resident black-capped chickadees, nasal sounding white-breasted nuthatches, echoing downy woodpeckers, and scolding tufted titmice. The shiny headed common grackles become numerous and are joined by the red-winged blackbirds favoring the reeds at the far ends of Dolan and Quinn Ponds.

When possible, I love to visit in the early morning. The ears provide the most clues as to which avian varieties may be present. However, early spring has the advantage of no leaves making actual sighting the birds a lot easier. As many times as I have visited, there has been no occasion when I have not been surprised at something I've seen - a special plant, flower, animal, sound, or drama of nature.

The American Toad chorus was heard a few times early this season, primarily at Dolan Pond. One wonders if the goldfish, eventually cleaned out of Quinn Pond by a great blue heron, had unbalanced the toad population there. Usually in June, the tiny toads move out of the ponds onto land to move out to become our common garden hop-toads. Dolan Pond is one of the few places in Newton where they breed.

Spring is the time when migrating birds head north and they find Newton's green spaces, such as the Dolan Pond Conservation Area (DPCA), very attractive rest stops. They may stay for a day or perhaps several, taking advantage of the food, water, and shelter available.

In April, I love watching for the first palm warblers with their active tail wagging up and down and their yellow color providing some brightness in the otherwise drab landscape. This year they showed up on 4/12 and were around for about a week. These are usually the first of the wave of some possible two dozen warbler varieties that could stop off. The colorful yellow-rumped warblers are usually next and fairly abundant - older birders may prefer their nom-de-plume of "myrtle warbler" which sounds a lot better for this quite beautiful bird. There was even a report of a wild turkey at Quinn Pond on 4/24 and other April visitors included ruby-crowned kinglet and a pair of red-tailed hawks.

A singing white-eyed vireo, showed up on 4/25 and stayed for a few days - a nice treat. They seem to appear every few years and it was one of these birds many years ago that convinced me that interesting birds could be found in one's own neighborhood (rather than trekking off to a famous birding hotspot like Mt. Auburn Cemetery).

Deb and Frank Howard reported a Sharp-shinned hawk in April, a small hawk which is quite capable of snatching sparrows and such in mid-flight. A bird walk with Newton Over 55's Parks and Rec group on 4/21 yielded a pair of eastern phoebes, a belted kingfisher, and a pair of wood ducks - not bad for a mid afternoon walk. April 28 saw the return of the first garrulous gray catbird. The chatter of perhaps 7 nesting pairs enlivens the area all summer.

A pair of green-winged teal spent a few days in mid-April at the far end of Dolan Pond. These are small ducks but the male is quite distinctive with his cinnamon brown head, teal green eye area, and noticeable white vertical body stripe. At least one pair of mallards seems to feel right at home in the area and are most often seen at Dolan Pond.

As you may know, Dolan Pond Conservation Area has a number of large birdhouses intended as nest boxes for wood ducks installed by the Boy Scouts. If you build it they will come. It was interesting observing two males vying over the attention of a female on Dolan Pond. They have also been seen in Banana Pond. Listen for their distinctive rising squeal or whistle. The male is very colorful and the female has a white comet shaped eye patch. They can be identified at a distance by their forward and backward neck movement. One can hope they have chosen one of the nest boxes high on a tree - there really is logic for wood ducks to nest high off the ground with all the rain we have seen. Hopefully they have found a suitable nest and we will once again see ducklings this year.

Perhaps the biggest attraction at Dolan Pond this year was Mother Goose, who once again nested on the same grassy swale in Dolan Pond as last year. This year the first egg was laid on Easter (an Easter egg?) and another soon followed. Mother Goose was observed lifting herself up and moving the egg around with her foot (ala "March of the Penguins"). The week of rain in May raised the water level quite a bit, with reports of Dolan Pond covering part of the Cumberland Path at its peak. The water level got so high that the nest became flooded. With no way to move the eggs, they lost valuable heat in the water and Mother Goose was forced to abandon the nest. Many visitors (especially children) would check on progress daily and were quite disappointed not to see goslings this year.

May brought a wonderful succession of warblers and other birds to Dolan Pond. Yellow warblers seem to be staying around to breed this year. This spring there were an abundant number of baltimore orioles and warbling vireos. Northern waterthrush seem to favor the area around the Quinn Pond overlook most years but were not heard as much this year as in other years. Some of the other visitors included swainson's thrush, northern parula, black throated blue warbler, american redstart, blue-winged warbler, nashville warbler, tennessee warbler, blackpoll warbler, red-eyed vireo, hairy woodpecker, and even a great-crested flycatcher. As we move into June, a green heron appears to be frequenting Dolan Pond.

The Newton Housing Authority has recently completed the renovations at the Forte house (76 Webster Park) and a family is expected to move there in July. A memorial plaque honoring conservationist Irene Forte (who passed away at 104) is expected to be unveiled at that time. Habitat for Humanity's resources had been stretched by Hurricane Katrina but hopefully a groundbreaking for the Habitat portion of the property will take place later this year. Two thirds of the property is being preserved as open space and will become part of the Dolan Pond Conservation area.

Erica Horowitz and Corinne Mitchell, students at Newton North High School We are students of Newton North High School, and have been studying wetlands as part of an environmental service project for their AP Biology class. Check out their new poster on the bulletin

board at Dolan Pond dealing with wetland depletion, the plants and animals that depend on wetlands for survival, and ways in which the reader may help preserve wetlands.

To find out more about Dolan Pond, check out <http://www.newtonconservators.org/4dolan.htm>. Dolan Pond is only one of the many wonderful open spaces in Newton. Find a place near where you live or work, open your eyes and ears, and make it your own. You never know what surprises await you!

## EcoAlert from American P.I.E. - Tree Literacy

The removal of trees is one of the most longstanding and significant ways in which we have altered the landscape of the United States. In the past, forests were cleared to allow for agriculture, to provide fuel for domestic purposes, to provide charcoal or wood for construction; sometimes to fuel locomotives, and sometimes to smelt metals. More recently, trees are simply taken down under the banner of 'development.'

Deforestation exacerbates the global climate crisis. Trees capture and store carbon dioxide. This 'carbon sink' effect exists as trees grow; (older trees grow less rapidly and thus have a lower intake of carbon dioxide). All trees eventually die and rot, then releasing most of the stored carbon back to the atmosphere. The use of trees to curb climate change, therefore, can not fully counter-balance the current high level of greenhouse gases emitted in the U.S. Trees, however, can store a considerable amount of carbon dioxide, and their loss only increases the release of heat-trapping gases into the atmosphere.

The importance of trees in curbing global warming can be measured by visiting <http://www.americanforests.org/resources/ccc>. The Climate Change Calculator, devised by the American Forests organization, enables a determination of how many trees are needed to capture and safely store the fossil fuel emissions associated with our own daily activities. The results can be startling and at the same time stimulate a search for ways in which individuals and households can make a difference.

The unrelenting appetite for fossil fuel has put Earth - and the entire community of life - in jeopardy. It's time to heed the warming warnings...to powerdown our energy requirements, drive a fuel efficient vehicle, drive less, buy energy-saving products, use green power, and support clean energy policies. It's time, too, to plant trees.

Are there trees in your neighborhood landscape? Does your community have a community forestry program? Developing such a program is within the means of any community, large or small. At a time when humans are doing away with much of the planet's familiar and unfamiliar flora of the forest, it's time for communities and residents to work together to plant, help preserve and protect their community trees

Alienation from our natural, forest roots is at the heart of the global climate crisis. Trees can help abate the crisis by capturing and storing carbon dioxide, and tree literacy can help restore our unity with nature.

Act today 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,

## The 10 most unwanted

by Jill Hahn/ Special To The Newton Tab  
Wednesday, June 7, 2006

*Editor's note: This is a very relevant article on invasive plants which are such a danger to our conservation areas! This article is reprinted from the Environmental Page of the Newton Tab: and will be archived at <https://greennewton.org/tabarchives.html>. Check out the archive page for other great articles from the Environmental Page in the Newton Tab.*

If you're like me, you started thumbing through garden catalogs in the dark days of early February, ogling the lush photographs and dreaming of how all those perfect, blooming plants would look in your own yard. Of course, your yard was covered with 2 1/2 feet of rock-hard snow in early February, and there wasn't enough daylight to grow a mushroom. Sending photos of bright flowers and vivid fruit to New Englanders in February is like sending a frosty six-pack to a recovering alcoholic. Common sense might just go out the window. And the choices you make as you admire those glossy advertisements can have an impact far beyond the corners of your yard.

Consider:

"Lonicera maackii [Amur honeysuckle]... produces masses of white flowers that mature to yellow followed by a profusion of 1/4" bright red fruit persisting into winter... adaptable to poor soils..." (Nature Hills Nursery) "This climbing Bittersweet Vine produces sunny yellow seed pods that give way to bright red, decorative berries... thrives in the poorest of soils. Songbirds love to gather around this attractive plant, and so will you!" (Michigan Bulb Company)

Wow, those plants sound great! But what the catalogs don't tell you is that these two species are on the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program's "Ten most unwanted invasive species" list, villains that threaten the wellbeing of the native plants and animals that have defined our natural landscape for millennia.

An invasive species is one that, once established, manages to spread in numbers and space to the exclusion of other plants. Alien invaders, those imported from other countries, tend to be especially damaging because the predators that might keep them in check in

their native habitat don't exist here.

If you look around your yard, you will likely find that most of the familiar plants that define your personal landscape are actually alien species. That rhododendron just bursting into bloom is as likely to hail from Japan as from North Carolina. The tulips came from Central Asia, the daffodils from the Mediterranean. Even the grass species growing in your lawn were introduced from Europe. Although they are not native to the U.S., most of these species are well-mannered and don't present a problem to the forests and meadows of New England. What sets such species as the honeysuckle and bittersweet apart is that they are not content to stay where they are put. The very attributes that make you want to buy them (thrive in the poorest of soils, attractive to birds) are what make them a threat.

Five key biologic traits characterize invasive species: 1) they produce large quantities of seeds; 2) they have effective dispersal mechanisms; 3) they are readily established; 4) they grow rapidly; and 5) they are effective competitors. The birds, for example, that flock to your bittersweet vine to eat its berries become dispersal agents that carry its seeds to your neighbor's yard, our woods and roadsides, the local Audubon preserve. Every manager of natural spaces in our state is currently waging war against spreading stands of alien invaders. When the diversity of native plants becomes overwhelmed by stands of a single, introduced species, it can cause the disappearance or extinction not just of those outcompeted plants, but of the animals that depended on them as well.

So what can you, the responsible gardener, do? Before you make an impulse buy from a garden catalog or center, do a little research. There are many sites online that can help you identify, and avoid, alien invaders (The New England Wildflower Society has a well-researched list, as well as a list of native alternatives, <http://www.newfs.org/conserve/invasive.htm>). To get you started, here are a few plants you should not buy:

Goutweed, or snow-in-winter (*Aegopodium podagraria*), a variegated, three-leaved groundcover that's almost impossible to pull out because it propagates by easily-fragmented runners; those non-native honeysuckles (*Lonicera Morrowii*, *L. tatarica*, *L. Maackii*, *L. x bella* & *L. japonica*); Porcelain Berry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*); Yellow Flag Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*); Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*), that ever-popular large woody shrub that turns bright scarlet in autumn.

Be especially suspicious of plants touted as able to grow in all conditions, or as good for erosion control. Become familiar with the top 10 unwanted species and eradicate them ruthlessly whenever you see them. Some of them will be obvious weeds, while others hold pride of place in many local gardens. It hurts to look at your beautiful burning bush specimen as an alien enemy, but that shrub doesn't look so beautiful when it's monopolizing the understory of the local forest.

Now excuse me while I go dig up the prickly but lovely Japanese barberry bush that's screening my compost bin, and leap back into my losing battle with the Japanese knotweed that is marching its way up my backyard. Thank goodness I wasn't the one who decided that might be a nice ornamental plant and set it loose on an unsuspecting Newton.

Jill Hahn, a Newton Highlands resident, is a biologist, a writer, and a mom. All three roles contribute to her interest in environmental issues. This article is archived at [greennewton.org/tabarchives.html](http://greennewton.org/tabarchives.html).

Here are the top 10 species of plants that are listed as unwanted by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program:

- Oriental bittersweet *Celastrus orbiculata*
- Purple loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria*
- Autumn olive *Elaeagnus umbellata*
- Japanese, Morrow's, and Amur honeysuckles *Lonicera* sp.
- Multiflora rose *Rosa multiflora*
- Norway maple *Acer platanoides*
- Garlic mustard *Alliaria petiolata*
- Shining and common buckthorns *Rhamnus fragula*, *R. cathartica*
- Common reed *Phragmites communis*
- Common and Japanese barberries *Berberis vulgaris*, *B. thunbergii*

## Notes of Interest

### Writing on the Landscape, June 11th, 10:00am-1:00pm, Jamaica Pond

On Sunday, June 11, from 10:00 am until 1:00 pm, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site and Brookline Adult & Community will be offering a special writing workshop at Jamaica Pond entitled "Writing on the Landscape". This creative writing class will be led by noted Jamaica Plain writer Kathryn Deputat and is open to writers of all abilities. To register, contact Brookline Adult & Community Education's registration office at 617-730-2700. There is a \$5.00 fee.

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)

The next city **Off-leash task force meeting** is scheduled for **Thursday, June 15, 6:30pm**, Room 222, City Hall. The task force is moving toward coming up with a proposal. 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/>

## News from the Green Decade Coalition

### RESCHEDULED ANNUAL PLANT & GARDEN SALE TO BENEFIT GREEN DECADE PROGRAMS

**Saturday, June 10 -- 9:30am to 12:30pm**

**10 Lindbergh Avenue, West Newton (off Waltham St., 3 blocks from Washington St.)**

Rescheduled from May, this event includes free advice from expert gardeners plus all kinds of plants available for sale. Proceeds benefit the Green Decade Coalition/Newton's environmental education programs. Special this year is a generous donation of plants from the recent Newton Plant Sale; purchase of these select items will benefit both the Green Decade and the Newton Pride Committee. We accept and appreciate plant donations: annuals, perennials, ground cover, vines, seeds, tree & shrub seedlings, plus decorative items such as flower pots, baskets & more! Please drop off donations the week of June 5-9 to 10 Lindbergh Avenue, West Newton. Tables will be set up to receive your donations. All plant donations must be labeled but do not have to be in containers. Volunteers are needed at the sale on Saturday.

### ENVIRONMENTAL SPEAKER SERIES: "Reflections on the Charles River" and Annual Environmental Leadership Awards

**Monday, June 12, 7-9 PM**

**Newton Free Library, Druker Auditorium. Free to the public.**

**Co-Sponsored by the Green Decade Coalition/Newton and the Newton Free Library**

The Green Decade will present their Annual Environmental Leadership Awards to a Newton individual, an organization and a business who have made an outstanding contribution to the environment. The event will also include a slide presentation by the Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA) on the beauty and wonderful recreational resource of the Charles River. CRWA is a member of the Green Decade, dedicated to protecting and making the river safe for our enjoyment. For more information: 617-965-1995 or [greendecade.org](http://greendecade.org), Upcoming Events. To see 2005 and 2004 award winners: <https://greennewton.org/environmentalawards.html>

### NEWTON FARMERS MARKET BEGINS JULY 11!

The Farmer Market will be in two locations again this year: Cold Spring Park on Tuesdays, 1:30-6 pm and on Fridays, 10 a-2 p at the Post 440 parking lot on California St., Nonantum. The Farmers Market will run through October, and the Green Decade will have a stand at both markets. Join our volunteers for an hour or two and help us provide resources about the environment and the Green Decade. To volunteer or for more information, contact [contact@greendecade.org](mailto:contact@greendecade.org).

## News from the Newton History Museum



Wednesday, June 14, 6 pm - Newton Historical Society Annual Meeting & Open House at the Durant Kenrick House at 286 Waverly Avenue, Newton

Members and friends of the Newton Historical Society are invited to attend. Guest Speaker: Roger Avery, President, The Durant Homestead Foundation.

Tuesday, June 20, 7:30-9 pm - The Stonecarver's Art: Newton's Historic Burying Grounds as Museums of New England History Newton History Museum. Free.

Donna LaRue will present a slide lecture to explore "reading" Newton's burying grounds as environmental museums. Carvers whose work appears in Newton also worked throughout Greater Boston and beyond. For example, Newton's grounds include the 17th-century work of printer and carver John Foster of Dorchester, who also made well-known stones (and woodcuts) found elsewhere in New England. The neatly chiseled edges and softly rounded faces carved by Newton's own Daniel Hastings in the late 18th century also appear in early sites throughout Greater Boston. Strongly recommended as background for the July living history walk with Mistress Elizabeth. Donna La Rue has researched New England burying grounds since 1986. Her graduate work in the liturgical arts has led her to focus on American colonial burying grounds and church history sites, and she offers school and library visits as well as weekly summer tours in the Harvard Square area.

Thursday, June 22, 7:30-9 pm - Historic Newton Postcards: Norumbega Night Newton History Museum. Free.

Calling all postcard collectors! Norumbega Park and the Totem Pole Ballroom are among everyone's favorite pieces of Newton history. Come see the Newton History Museum's Norumbega Park cards, including cards from the collection of the late Bob Pollack, the unofficial historian of Norumbega. Help the Museum compile a catalog of Norumbega cards by bringing your cards to the meeting for scanning and annotating. The finished catalog will be distributed to all attendees.

## News from Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA)

**Volunteer with CRWA!** - Love being on the river? Want an excuse to be outside this summer? We still need volunteers to help monitor the health of the river! Become a water quality monitoring volunteer and collect river samples once a month - usually the third Tuesday morning. Currently we need volunteers at sites in Bellingham, Norfolk, Franklin, Newton, and Boston.

If you live in or near these communities and are interested in volunteering, please contact Rebecca Scibek at (781) 788-0007 x200 or [rscibek\(AT\)crwa.org](mailto:rscibek(AT)crwa.org).

**Brown Bag Lunch on Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup> from 12:30-1:30pm, at CRWA's Office - Join Urban Restoration Specialist Pallavi Mande and Director of Projects Kate Bowditch as they discuss their work with environmentally sensitive urban development in the Harvard/Allston area. To RSVP, email [rscibek\(AT\)crwa.org](mailto:rscibek(AT)crwa.org).**

**Attend the Stormwater Sessions Workshop in June - *The Charles River Watershed Stormwater Sessions: Designing and Paying for a Better Stormwater Management Program* is a day-long workshop on low-impact development (LID) approaches, stormwater best management practices and the tools and techniques to finance them. Co-sponsored by CRWA and MA Office of Coastal Zone Management, the workshop will be held on Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup> at Dean College in Franklin. We strongly encourage municipal officials involved in planning, conservation, stormwater and budgetary decision-making to attend this workshop. Feel free to invite interested friends and colleagues, as well! Registration is required; for more information call Anna Eleria at 781-788-0007 x225.**

## 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 should be in the mail shortly and if you are a Newton Conservators member should be receiving it in the near future. This is the first issue under new editor, Eric Reenstierna, who is taking over after many terrific years under the editorship of Doug Dickson.

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.. June 21, 7:30 pm at City Hall Room 203.

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.

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 [emallist\(AT\)newtonconservators.org](mailto:emallist(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 sporadical 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.

