
Newton Conservators Invasive Plant Sessions Fall 2019

Newton Conservators fights invasive plant species to preserve and improve the native habitat at our parks and conservation areas. Call the leader or check the website (<https://newtonconservators.org/events/>) for updates to this schedule.

Saturday, Sept. 7, 9:30 am – 12:00 noon

Invasives pull at Hemlock Gorge. Near 2 Ellis St., Newton, MA 02464.

We will control garlic mustard, knotweed, and black swallow-wort infestations inside beautiful Hemlock Gorge Park, and the adjoining walking trail along the Charles River at Quinobequin Rd. Help keep the invaders out of these beautiful parks! Wear long pants and garden gloves. Some tools and gloves are available but bring your own digging tool and loppers if you can. Meet at the Ellis St parking lot.

Leader is Katherine Howard, 617-721-2571.

Sunday, Sept. 8, 9:30 am – 12:00 noon

Invasives pull at Crystal Lake.

We will work at the city's small pocket park along Center St. just outside of Newton Center, next to the house at 1429 Centre St. Wear long pants and garden gloves. Some tools and gloves are available, but bring your own digging tool and loppers if you can.

Leader is Beth Wilkinson, 617-966-7491.

Saturday, Sept. 14, 9:30 am – 12:00 noon

Clean up and invasives pull at the path through 15 Bracebridge Rd.

Come see the many native species planted here as habitat restoration of this beautiful site, and help keep up that project and the walking path. Wear long pants and garden gloves. Some tools and gloves are available, but bring your own digging tool and loppers if you can.

Leader is Beth Wilkinson, 617-966-7491.

Sunday, Sept. 15, 9:30 am – 12:00 noon

Invasives pull at Nahanton Park Woodcock Meadow.

We will get any stragglers of black swallow-wort, cut the knotweed and bittersweet, and pull seedlings from the meadow. Wear long pants and garden gloves. Some tools and gloves are available, but bring your own digging tools and loppers if you can. Meet at the Woodcock Meadow parking lot on Nahanton St.

Leader is Katherine Howard, 617-721-2571.

About the Plant Invaders



Garlic Mustard arrived from Europe as a medicinal and garden herb, and is now an invader of our backyards, parks, forests, and conservation areas. It quickly covers vast areas and low-light forested areas, shades out other plants, chemically alters the soil to inhibit germination of competitor seeds, and alters habitat for native insects such as butterflies. It is easy to manage by pulling when the second-year plants are flowering in April/May. If not, each plant will scatter hundreds to thousands of seeds that will become first-year plants the next year, or remain as viable seeds for several more years. The plants must be disposed of as trash, not as yard waste.



Japanese Knotweed is a bamboo-like invader from Asia that can create dense 8' tall single-species stands. It is a tough adversary, because any small root fragments left behind spring back to life the following year. Scientists seek biological control agents, but until then we must control by hand. Persistence pays with this species, and eradication is possible, but it takes several years to truly finish the job.



Buckthorn is another non-native shrub that is proliferating in forested areas (see Cold Spring Park), covering the understory and preventing native forests from re-seeding.



Black Swallow-wort is a non-native vine that is appearing in alarming numbers in woodland areas and backyards. It crowds out native species, thereby reducing wildlife habitat. One very unfortunate effect is that monarchs can confuse swallow-wort with milkweed. They lay their eggs, but the larvae cannot survive due to the toxic nature of the swallow-wort leaves.

Our sessions also tackle multi-flora rose, tree of heaven, oriental bittersweet, and black locust.