



## Newton Conservators E-Bulletin

Wednesday, January 29, 2020

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



### January-February Happenings!

2020 is well underway and it has already been a busy month as we savor the city's latest open space in Webster Woods (we will have a number of events there in the spring) and move ahead on various aspects of the new proposed Riverside Greenway. It was heartening to see a crowd of hardy birders at Nahanton Park this cold morning on a bird walk with visiting Newton born birding expert Ollie Komar along with local leaders, Haynes Miller and Pete Gilmore.



Below we list a few events near and slightly farther away that might be of interest. Of special note is a great **lecture Thursday evening** at the Newton Library by one of our board members, Michael Clarke, on the 100 year history of our Parks and Recreation Department (recently renamed Parks, Recreation and Culture Department). Mike has been on its Commission for many years and has a great perspective.

The future of Newton's Open Space over the next few years is at stake and you can have a hand in it by **participating in a survey** coming out on Thursday and attending a **Public hearing on Thursday, Feb 6 on Newton's new Open Space Plan**. Our Spring Walk Series and Invasive Removal events are being finalized and will be published in the near future. And please put Wednesday, May 6 on your calendars for our **Annual Newton Conservators Dinner Meeting** - this year featuring Newton born caterpillar expert, Sam Jaffe.

We would love to have you become more involved in the work of the Newton Conservators - we have lots of needs - organizing walks, helping with our invasive pulls and other public events, writing for our newsletter, helping maintain our database, social media and publicity, and many more opportunities to utilize your talent for open space! In addition, we are looking for members with legal and CPA skills as we move ahead with agreements related to conservation restrictions and trail work (e.g. Riverside Greenway). If you are interested, please contact us at [president@newtonconservators.org](mailto:president@newtonconservators.org).

**Thursday, January 30, 7-9 pm**  
**Newton History Series: A Century of Parks & Recreation in Newton**  
**Lecture by Michael Clarke**  
**Newton Free Library**

<https://newtonconservators.org/events/a-century-of-parks-and-recreation-in-newton/>

Because of its relative affluence, citizen activism, and self-promotion as a desirable place to live, Newton was a foremost player in the parks, playground and organized sports movements of the late 19th and 20th centuries. Mike Clarke's talk traces the interaction of these national and international movements with Newton's improvement societies, playground, recreation and parks commissions, led in part by Newton mayor Edwin O. Childs and its first and longest-serving superintendent of playgrounds, Ernst Hermann. Period photographs illustrate their philosophy of the role of play in children's development. Michael Clarke is a director of the Newton Conservators, an alternate member of the Newton Parks and Recreation Commission, and retired BC Professor. This lecture is part of Historic Newton's "Newton History Series" and is co-sponsored by the Newton Free Library and Newton Conservators.



**Wednesday, February 5, 7-8:30 pm**

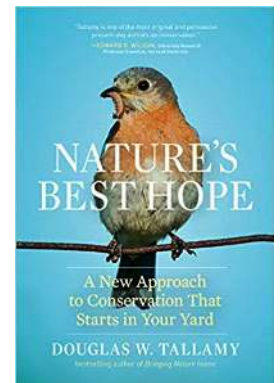
**Nature's Best Hope**

**Doug Tallamy, Professor of Entomology and Wildlife Biology, U of Delaware**

Harvard University Science Center Hall B, 1 Oxford Street, Cambridge, MA

<https://grownativemass.org/Our-Programs/evenings-experts>

Recent headlines about global insect declines, the impending extinction of one million species worldwide, and three billion fewer birds in North America are a bleak reality check about how ineffective our current landscape designs have been at sustaining the plants and animals that sustain us. Such losses are not an option if we wish to continue our present-day standard of living on Planet Earth. The good news is that none of this is inevitable. Doug Tallamy will discuss simple steps that each of us can—and must take—to reverse declining biodiversity and to explain why we, ourselves, are nature's best hope. Doug Tallamy is the nationally acclaimed author of *Bringing Nature Home*, and the co-author of *The Living Landscape*. In 2013, he was awarded the Garden Club of America's Margaret Douglas Medal for Conservation Education. His newest book, *Nature's Best Hope*, is being released the day before this event, and copies may be purchased at the lecture. Parking at Harvard University garages available for this event. The lecture is free and sponsored by Grow Native Massachusetts (<https://grownativemass.org/Our-Programs/evenings-experts>). See their website for parking instructions for Harvard University Parking for this lecture.



**Thursday, February 6 7 - 9 pm**

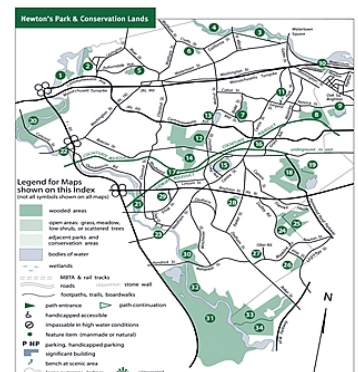
**Open Space Plan Public Hearing**

**War Memorial Auditorium, Newton City Hall, 1000**

**Commonwealth Ave**

<https://newtonconservators.org/events/open-space-plan-public-hearing/>

Don't miss your chance to weigh in on Newton's Open Space Plan for the next six years! There will be a meeting for public input on Thursday evening, February 6, at the War Memorial in City Hall, 7 to 9 pm. There also will be a public survey released on Thursday January 30 at <https://bit.ly/2U5c0nv>. Please be sure to respond!



## Friday, February 14 - Monday, February 17 Great Backyard Bird Count

<https://newtonconservators.org/events/join-the-great-backyard-bird-count-2/>

Bird watchers of all ages count birds to create a real-time snapshot of where birds are. Details can be found on the Great Backyard Bird Count website.



## Saturday, February 29 Deadline to Apply for a Newton Conservators Grant

<https://newtonconservators.org/events/deadline-to-apply-for-a-newton-conservators-grant-2/>

The Newton Conservators provides grants to Newton's schools, educational institutions, groups, and institutions for the purpose of fostering its mission. February 29th is the deadline to apply for a grant this winter. Learn more at <https://newtonconservators.org/grants-program/>



## Sunday, March 1, 2020, 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm Pollinator Action Plan Bemis Hall, 15 Bedford Road - Lincoln, MA

<https://lincolnconservation.org/lincoln-pollinator-action-plan-planting-the-way-for-biodiversity-and-climate-resilience/>

This talk is part of a series of public programs on the Lincoln Pollinator Action Plan. Evan Abramson, Principal at LandscapelInteractions and architect of Lincoln's Plan, will discuss how to create and maintain functionally diverse native pollinator habitat, increase biodiversity and improve the resiliency of landscapes. There will be plenty of time for questions. The talk is free and all are welcome.



Wild pollination systems are being degraded rapidly, raising concern over an impending ecological catastrophe. Yet most efforts to create pollinator habitat have only increased common species, rather than the range of wild pollinators needed for ecosystem health and resiliency. Explored will be the critical role of plant selection in designing and planning for pollinators on a range of land use scenarios. There will be a sneak peak at the new pollinator habitat garden design for Birches School, part of the Lincoln Pollinator Action Plan for 2020-2022. This talks will break down the science behind native plants as well as crop pollination, and explore the crucial role that native pollinators play in biodiversity, ecosystem health, climate resiliency and food security.

## Tuesday March 3 Northland Referendum Vote

Vote in this year's Massachusetts primary election and also cast your ballot in the special referendum vote on the Northland development project. As you may know, the City Council had voted to approve the Northland project. However, a group collected sufficient signatures for a referendum to be held on the project - currently scheduled for Tuesday, March 3, in conjunction with the Massachusetts Primary. The controversy has been covered in the media, e.g. <https://patch.com/massachusetts/newton/newton-hold-citywide-vote-northland-project->



<http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/planning/current/devrev/hip/northland.asp>. Detailed information on the plans can be found on the city website at <http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/planning/current/devrev/hip/northland.asp>.

**Wednesday, May 6 6-9 pm**  
**Newton Conservators Annual Dinner Meeting**  
**American Legion Post 440, 295 California Street**  
<https://newtonconservators.org/events/2020-annual-dinner-meeting/>

The 59th annual dinner meeting of the Newton Conservators will be held on Wednesday, May 6, 2020. In addition to awards, the main speaker will be Sam Jaffe, founder and executive director of The Caterpillar Lab. Conservators members will receive an invitation and registration form in the mail. Anyone can register for the dinner online. Stay tuned for more details!



**Watch for our Spring Lineup of Walks and Invasive Pulls Coming Soon!!**

## **Newton Conservators Newsletter - Webster Woods Issue!**

Our most recent newsletter was devoted to the topic of **Webster Woods** with two outstanding articles. This and past issues can be found online at <https://newtonconservators.org/newsletters/>.



# NEWSLETTER

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

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## 2019 Officers and Directors

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## A Letter from Edwin S. Webster

Based on historical documents, Newton Conservators' director Dan Brody has created a narrative that Edwin S. Webster, the original owner of Webster Woods, might have composed at this moment when the future of much of the woods is about to be decided. A version of the letter, with references, larger maps, and additional photos and maps, can be found online at [newtonconservators.org/webster-letter](http://newtonconservators.org/webster-letter).

### To the members of the Newton City Council:



My name is Edwin S. Webster. I have a unique perspective for you to consider as you evaluate Mayor Fuller's proposal to take by eminent domain 17 acres of the woods that are named after my family.

I was born in 1867. My friend Charles Stone and I founded Stone & Webster in 1889. What began as a small engineering consulting firm quickly grew to a large enterprise that built streetcar systems, power plants, and office buildings throughout the world.

By 1895, our success made it possible for my wife, Jane, and me to build a 20-room country house on Hammond Street in Newton. I have resided in (or, you may say, haunted) the house ever since.

Hammond Street, and the nearby pond, were named for Thomas Hammond, who farmed much of the nearby land in the 17th century. By the time we moved to this part of Newton, farmland had mostly been replaced by forest, and the land was fragmented among a half dozen owners. Much of the land was owned by my friend, U. S. Circuit Court Judge John Lowell. John and his children built several stately houses on their land on the east side of the pond.



Jane and I were attracted to the area by this description in the 1889 *King's Handbook of Newton*:

"So broad and sequestered and unfrequented is this lovely forest that no sounds of prosaic human life invade its cloisters, and nothing disturbs the saunterer's reflections but the low songs of the birds, or the scampering of an occasional gray squirrel over the dry leaves."

*Continued on page 2*

## PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP



In case you missed our recent renewal letter in December, we would be very grateful for your continued support by renewing your membership. Perhaps, consider renewing at a higher level, adding an extra donation, or purchasing a gift membership for someone else who is passionate about open space.

You can renew or join the Newton Conservators online at <https://newtonconservators.org/renewal-2020/>. A link to our annual members' renewal letter outlining last year's activities can also be found

at the above link.

Donations may be made at our secure link <https://newtonconservators.123signup.com/donation/21167>. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit, we also

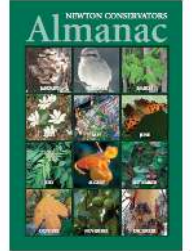
accept donations for a number of affiliated local open space groups including Friends of Webster Woods, Friends of Cold Spring Park, the Riverside Trails Working Group and others. As part of the donation process, you can specify a group in the "Comments" section of the form. Thanks so much!

## Membership & Publications!



Did you know that you can Join the Newton Conservators online. And consider a gift membership for a conservation-minded friend. New members get a trail guide as well!

Visit <https://newtonconservators.org/membership/> for details on membership options. Did you know that you can register and pay for membership, events, [buy a copy of our Almanac or newly revised Trail Guide](#), or make a donation to the Newton Conservators online? The Trail Guides and Almanac are also available at your local Newton Bookstores. Shop Local!



**Mission:** *The Newton Conservators promotes the protection and preservation of natural areas, including parks, playgrounds, forests and streams, which are open or may be converted to open space for the enjoyment and benefit of the people of Newton. It further aims to disseminate information about these and other environmental matters. A primary goal is to foster the acquisition of land, buildings and other facilities to be used for the encouragement of scientific, educational, recreational, literary and other public pursuits that will promote good citizenship and the general welfare of the people of our community.*

- E-Bulletin Editor & President Ted Kuklinski, Newton Conservators ([ebulletin@newtonconservators.org](mailto:ebulletin@newtonconservators.org))

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2/4/2020

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