

WALKS SCHEDULE SPRING 2020

www.newtonconservators.org

Please note: Walks meet at different times. Some trips are weather dependent. Please call trip leader if in doubt.

Sunday, March 15 at 2:00 pm

TAKE A REAL HIKE IN NEWTON: DISCOVER THE NEWTON AQUEDUCTS

A 5-mile hike through woods, meadows and fields along the Newton sections of the Sudbury and Cochituate aqueducts. This is a steady but not fast hike. Participants should be in sufficiently good shape to keep up with the group. (There are cutoffs for those who wish to shorten the hike.)

Meet in front of the Starbucks coffee shop near the Waban MBTA station.

Trip Leader: Henry Finch, 617-964-4488.

Saturday, March 28 at 1:00 pm

STONE WALLS OF SAW MILL BROOK PARK CONSERVATION AREA



Stone walls are a feature of the New England landscape that reveal stories of Newton's agricultural past. Join BU professor Richard Primack to explore the varied stone walls of Saw Mill Brook Conservation Area. An added bonus will be a visit to the old mill dam and site

of the sawmill.

Meet at the Vine Street entrance; extra parking is available on Wayne Street.

Trip Leader: Richard Primack, 857-636-8378.

Sunday, April 5 at 1:00 pm

(Rain or Shine)

THE HIDDEN LIFE OF VERNAL POOLS: FOREST AND VERNAL POOL EXPLORATION AT WEBSTER WOODS



Join us in Webster Woods, Newton's largest conservation area, as we walk the woods and explore the large vernal pool found there. Vernal pools, because of periods of drying, do not support breeding populations of fish. Many organisms have evolved to use these temporary

wetlands, where they are not eaten by fish. Join us as we search for obligate vernal pool species, including fairy shrimp, spotted salamanders, and wood frogs. The amphibians are

the stars of the show, but you will also watch for mammal tracks and learn about trees and other forest plants. Sampling equipment will be provided; bring hand lenses if you have them. We will walk even in the rain, so dress accordingly.

Meet at the end of Warren Street on the western edge of Webster Conservation Area.

Trip Leader: Eric Olson, 617-872-9928 on April 5.

Saturday, April 11 at 1:00 pm

(Rain or Shine)

THE HIDDEN LIFE OF VERNAL POOLS: FOREST AND VERNAL POOL EXPLORATION AT WEBSTER WOODS

This popular walk/activity is being repeated from April 5 (see description from that date).

Trip Leader: Jon Regosin, 774-364-2443.

Sunday, May 3 at 7:30 am

(Rain Date: May 21)

BIRD WALK AT COLD SPRING PARK

This 67-acre parcel has ample wooded areas, open fields, a brook and wetlands. It is one of the places in Newton where you may hear the call of the Great Horned Owl and observe spectacular songbirds like the Rose Breasted Grosbeak and the Indigo Bunting. Also frequently found at the park are many favorite migrants such as orioles, vireos, cardinals, goldfinches, and wrens.

Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome.

Enter the park at the Beacon Street entrance. Turn left, and go to the far end of the parking lot to meet group.

Trip Leader: Pete Gilmore, 617-969-1513.

Sunday, May 10 at 8:00 am

NAHANTON PARK MOTHER'S DAY BIRD WALK



Nahanton Park offers a mix of woodlands, wetlands, edge habitat and meadows along the Charles River, making it one of the best birding spots in Newton for both migratory and resident songbirds. Mother's Day occurs during the peak of the spring migration, so we will look for

a variety of brilliantly colored tropical birds on their way to

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breeding grounds farther north. Also expect newly arrived resident warblers, vireos, tanagers, orioles, swallows, and wrens.

Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome. Waterproof walking shoes are recommended. Walk will be cancelled in steady rain. Co-sponsored by the Newton Conservators and the Friends of Nahanton Park.

Meet at the Nahanton Street entrance next to the river. Parking is available inside the park.

Trip Leaders: Alison Leary, 617-821-5619 and Haynes Miller, 617-413-2419.

Saturday, May 16 at 8:00 am

(Rain date: May 17)

BIRD WALK ALONG CHARLES RIVER PATHWAY



Please join Alison Leary for a neighborhood bird walk along the Charles River Path to enjoy the sights and sounds of the river, including new spring migrants. We will look for seasonal migrants as we stroll the Charles River path along the Newton/Watertown line.

We expect to find several species of warblers, including Yellow, Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped Warblers and Palms. Length: About 3 miles at an easy pace.

Bring binoculars if you have them. In the event of steady rain, we will rechedule for Sunday.

Meeting place: Path entrance at Chapel and California Street.

Trip Leader: Alison Leary, 617-821-5619

Saturday, June 6 from 12:00 - 2:30 pm

(Rain Date: June 7)

WEST WEBSTER WOODS FERN WALK



The Hammond Pond/Webster Woods complex is the largest conservation area in Newton, and one of the most biodiverse. We will visit the western portion, a little southeast of Newton Centre, and see a dozen fern species and perhaps a club-moss or a lady slipper in bloom. It's not very hilly, but we may go off-trail a bit. Wear long pants and repellent. Bring any fern you would like to identify.

Meet at the end of Warren St. From Beacon, take Glen Ave. south, then first left onto Warren.

Trip Leader: Don Lubin, 617-254-8464, don@nefern.info, <http://nefern.info>

Sunday, June 7 from 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

COLD SPRING PARK INVASIVE PLANT EDUCATIONAL WALK

Join horticulturalist Bruce Wenning for training in identifying the invasive species that are found in this park as well as in everybody's yards! Learn the traits of invasive species, how and why they are so successful and hurt the native ecosystems, and how you can identify and control them in your yards and neighborhoods. Wear long pants and closed shoes.

Enter the park at the Beacon Street entrance. Turn left and go to the far end of the parking lot (circle) to meet group.

Trip Leader: Bruce Wenning, 617-962-0646.

PHOTOS ON PREVIOUS PAGE: SAW MILL BROOK PARK: KEN MALLORY. VERNAL POOL WALK: DAN BRODY, AMERICAN REDSTART: HAYNES MILLER, PHOTOS THIS PAGE: PALM WARBLER: HAYNES MILLER, FERN: DAN BRODY

About the Plant Invaders



PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

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.



PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

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.



PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

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.

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