

Newton Conservators E-Bulletin

Wednesday, March 31, 2021

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

# Happy Spring!



Spring is finally officially here and it is realy beginning to show in Newton! And with that, there are numerous open space and nature related events to consider. Given that our outdoor walk series is still restricted due to the pandemic and the success of our first webinar series last Fall, please join us in our **Spring Webinar Series** - see full information below! **The first will next Wednesday on April 7 about Vernal Pools** with the ever popular

speaker and board member, Barbara Bates.

The Newton Conservators will have a number of Invasive Pullling events on May 2 as part of NewtonSERVES - register starting April 9!

In addition, check out numerous other events that are happening that may be of interest starting **tonight** with a session on urbab biodiversity from Grow Native Massachusetts and tomorrow with a program on flooding in our local Charles River watershed with the CRWA. And lots more after that! Make sure to check our events listing below!

Our **Spring Newsletter** is out now - links below - with articles on Houghton Garden and the History of our Parks (and Department) in Newton as well as the above mentioned Webinar Series and Invasive Removal opportunities!

# Newton Conservators Spring 2021 Webinar Series

#### Enjoy Nature... with the Newton Conservators!

Join us for our online spring Wednesday webinar series. With continuing concerns for social distancing in the time of Covid-19, we offer a new series of online talks given by some of our expert walk leaders. Each program will begin at 7 pm and last approximately one hour. Please register in advance for each webinar since registrations will close at 3 PM on the day of the event.



You may register for the programs using the links below or by going to the event listing at <u>NewtonConservators.org</u>. You will receive an email confirmation after you have registered. If after registering you cannot attend, please cancel your reservation (as indicated on your confirmation) so that someone else may use the slot. Registration is limited to 100 slots. Check out these and other events on our <u>Newton Conservators Events Page</u>

Wednesday, April 7, 2021 7:00 - 8:30 pm Vernal Pools Barbara Bates, Naturalist Educator Newton Conservators Spring 2021 Webinar Series https://newtonconservators.org/events/webinar-vernal-pools/

Seasonal ponds - known as vernal pools - are full of life in the early spring and can be found throughout our area. Bare Pond (in Webster Woods) and Dolan Pond (West Newton) are two examples. Discover how these pools form and the many wonderful adaptations that allow the invertebrates and amphibians who inhabit these ephemeral pools to survive in the low-oxygen water. See fairy shrimp, salamanders, wood frogs and many more creatures. Learn about the commonly available materials you need if you want to try to see these interesting creatures up close by fishing for some (catch and release only!).

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Our presenter is Barbara Bates. For the past 16 years, Barbara has been a teacher naturalist for Mass Audubon's Habitat Education Center & Wildlife Sanctuary in Belmont, MA. Before the pandemic, she led guided nature walks for all ages on a variety of subjects



Retirement Communities and Senior Centers. She currently serves on the Board of the Newton Conservators. Barbara has retired several times - first from a long career in the high-tech world and more recently from teaching negotiation and conflict resolution as an adjunct faculty at Northeastern University. She loves all things nature.

To sign up for this webinar, please register on our Zoom page.

and presented programs at several Continuing Care

#### Wednesday, May 5, 2021, 7:00 - 8:30 pm Cold Spring Park: Problems, Progress and Possibilities Alan Nogee, President - Friends of Cold Spring Park Newton Conservators Spring 2021 Webinar Series https://newtonconservators.org/events/cold-spring-park-problems-progress-andpossibilities/

We will tour some of the fun and unique, natural and unnatural, historical and current, features of Cold Spring Park — a 67-acre green oasis in the heart of Newton. We'll look at some of the environmental and other challenges facing the park, and how the Friends of Cold Spring Park – with the support of Newton Conservators – is taking them on.





Our presenter is Alan Nogee, the president of The Friends of Cold Spring Park. Alan founded Friends of Cold Spring Park in 2018. He grew up in Newton Highlands, plaving in Cold Spring Park in the 1960s, and moved back in 2003. Alan is a mostly-retired career environmentalist, having worked as the Clean Energy Program Director for the Union of Concerned Scientists, and with other non-profits. Alan won an award from the Newton Conservators in 2020 for his work with Friends of Cold Spring Park.

To sign up for this webinar, please register on our Zoom page.

#### Wednesday, May 12, 2021, 7:00 - 8:30 pm Spring Birds in Cold Spring Park Pete Gilmore - Walks Coordinator for the Brookline Bird Club https://newtonconservators.org/events/planting-for-pollinators/

Since one can easily access photos of the common resident birds by watching the fall webinar on Birds in Cold Spring Park, we will focus on the colorful migrant and summer birds of Cold Spring Park in this webinar. We will look at the two different orioles, our hummingbird, the tanager and grosbeak and then sort out the sights and sounds of the American wood warblers. These latter birds are found only in the New World. Getting to know their sounds and field marks can be a challenge. This webinar will provide a decent start on that project.





Our presenter is Pete Gilmore, who is a retired mathematician from Northeastern University. Pete has been a birder since 1951 and has been active in Newton's Christmas Bird Count for 15 years. He writes a guarterly article on Newton's birds for the newsletter and leads spring and fall bird and nature walks. Pete serves on the boards of the Newton Conservators and the Brookline Bird Club and is its field trip coordinator. To sign up for this webinar, please register on our Zoom page.

Wednesday, May 19, 2021, 7:00 - 8:30 pm

#### Planting for Pollinators Beth Wilkinson - Master Gardener

https://newtonconservators.org/events/planting-for-pollinators-2/

Without the work of pollinators, we would not have food to eat. However, pollinator populations are decreasing at an alarming rate. Why? Partly due to climate change and the use of herbicides and largely due to vanishing habitat. Together, we can help to save the pollinators by preserving large tracts of habitat, but each of us also can do important work on a smaller scale—in our own yards and parks. Join this webinar to learn what you can plant to encourage pollinators to visit. We will review specific plants that grow well in Newton and the pollinators that they attract as well as what sorts of nesting materials they require.





Our presenter is Beth Wilkinson, who became a Master Gardener in 2003 and then earned a Field Botany Certificate from Native Plant Trust in 2009. In addition to helping to preserve publicly owned areas like Webster Woods where native plants and their pollinators can flourish, Beth enjoys working to attract pollinators to her own garden. She is a board member and the Walks Coordinator for Newton Conservators and a member of both the Newton Parks, Recreation, and Culture Commission and the Newton Tree Commission.

To sign up for this webinar, <u>please register on our Zoom page.</u>

#### Wednesday, June 2, 2021, 7:00 - 8:30 pm Pollinator Meadow-Making at Brandeis University: Lessons Learned Dr. Eric Olson - Brandeis Ecologist

https://newtonconservators.org/events/pollinator-meadow-making-at-brandeis-universitylessons-learned/

Starting with a small plot in 2016, a vibrantly colorful and diverse pollinator meadow has grown to cover a half-acre of former lawn, close to the center of the Brandeis campus. This successful habitat-making project was catalyzed by undergraduate student Matt Smetana, who back in 2015 requested permission to install a small patch of wildflowers to support local insects. Matt obtained funding for several scores of plants from the Brandeis University Sustainability Fund and sought faculty support from Brandeis ecologist Dr. Eric Olson.





With work from 2017 on by Eric and other faculty, the meadow continued to thrive, and the Brandeis administration eventually gave the go-ahead to expand the meadow to ten times its original size. By 2019, student and faculty surveys of pollinators and other meadow life demonstrated in striking fashion just how quickly we can give biodiversity a boost, even in a thickly settled community like Waltham.

In this webinar Dr. Olson will describe the stages of this transformation, and will reflect on lessons learned. The talk is supplemented by an annotated bibliography of how-to books, articles, websites, and videos, that also lists local organizations ready to help homeowners, schools, parks, and others to do their part supporting native bees and butterflies.

Our presenter is Eric Olson, who recently retired from Brandeis University, where he taught Field Biology and other courses for many years. **To sign up for this webinar**, <u>please register on</u> <u>our Zoom page</u>.

# **Other Events of Interest**

Wednesday, March 31, 2021, 7:00 - 8:30 pm Managing an Urban Landscape for Biodiversity With Rebecca McMackin, Director of Horticulture, Brooklyn Bridge Park <u>Grow Native Massachusetts - Evenings with Experts Series</u>

Habitat stewardship is a vital component of creating enduring and ecologically healthy landscapes, particularly in dense urban settings. But traditional landscaping practices rarely take biodiversity into consideration, and there is a dearth of effective guidelines to inform this

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goal. For horticulturist Rebecca McMackin and her team that cares for the native woodlands, wetlands, and meadows at Brooklyn Bridge Park, cultivating habitat is central to their work. Join us to learn how they are using ecological insight and experimentation to develop new management strategies— and why careful observation and documentation of the insects, birds, and other wildlife in the park has been so crucial to their success. <u>Register HERE.</u>



Rebecca McMackin is the Director of Horticulture for Brooklyn Bridge Park, where she manages 85 acres of diverse parkland with an eye towards habitat creation for birds, butterflies, and soil microorganisms. She is also the Vice-President of the Metro Hort Group in the New York tri-state region.

## Thursday, April 1, 2021, 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm Building Resilience Across the Charles Watershed Middle Watershed Community Meeting Charles River Watershed Association

Building Resilence on the Charles: Middle Watershed Community Meeting (facebook.com)



The <u>Charles River Watershed Association</u> has created a flood monitoring tool that shows flooding and rainfall scenarios in the Charles River Watershed and the impacts of potential green infrastructure solutions. This tool will equip watershed communities with the best possible information on community-specific impacts of climate change, helping to guide effective local investment, regulatory changes and predict and

**implement the best ways to respond to flooding.** CRWA invites you to a small Zoom discussion to hear your opinions, feedback, and ideas about the tool and how it can best serve you and your community.

Our second Zoom discussion will focus on the tool's relevance to the Middle parts of the watershed including Dedham, Newton, Belmont, Lexington, Lincoln, Wellesley, Weston, Waltham, Needham, Dover, Wayland, and Natick. Please join us and give input about your own climate-related stressors, your opinions about changing infrastructure, and your hopes for building climate resilience in your community! Share this email with your fellow residents, this is a conversation for everyone! <u>RSVP HERE!</u>

#### Tuesday, April 6, 2021, 7:00 - 8:00 pm Caterpillars, Connections, and Why Biodiversity Matters With Sam Jaffe, Director of the Caterpillar Lab Waltham Land Trust

Register for Waltham Land Trust's online event to learn more about native caterpillars, connections, and why biodiversity matters, with Sam Jaffe of The Caterpillar Lab. Using a combination of live presentation, digital microscope work, slides, and life history image plates, Sam Jaffe of <u>The Caterpillar Lab</u> will delve deeper into the world of native caterpillars than ever before. By exploring complex natural history stories involving caterpillars, their host plants, and their predators and parasitoids, the true scope and importance of biodiversity will be revealed. This presentation goes beyond the established narratives of bees and butterflies and will hopefully help guide us further in our efforts to support and promote local biodiversity.



The Zoom link will be provided in the registration confirmation email. Please keep the registration confirmation email for use the day of the event. <u>REGISTER HERE!</u>

Wednesday, April 7, 2021, Noon Newton Community Farm 2021 Seedling Sale Open to Public https://newtoncommunityfarm.org/news-events/2021-seedling-sale/

Announcing the NCF 2021 Seedling Sale! - Last year over 500 gardeners bought more than 20,000 seedlings at our first online order/curbside pickup Seedling Sale. Due to the pandemic, the volume of customers, and the small space for our seedlings, we have decided to repeat this process for our 2021 sale with two important changes, an early access purchasing option for Friends of the Farm (on Monday April 5 at Noon) and the reconfiguring of the online store so that customers sign in first and then order. We are doing this to

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express our appreciation to our donors who keep the Farm strong and to improve the robustness of the online store in order to process the high volume of orders.

## Thursday, April 8, 7:00 - 8:00 pm Vernal Pool Virtual Exploration With Matt Byrne, Ecologist

Lincoln Land Conservation Trust

Join LLCT and Matt Burne, Senior Ecologist with BSC Group, Inc and Vice-President of the Vernal Pool Association, for a captivating presentation about vernal pools. In lieu of an in-person walk this year, Matt will be sharing his amazing photos and stories via Zoom. Come explore the ephemeral nature and complex ecology of vernal



pools! There will be plenty of time for questions from the audience after Matt's presentation. Free, all are welcome. Register to receive the Zoom Meeting Link. <u>Info</u> <u>HERE!</u>

Matt Burne is an expert vernal pool ecologist and the co-founder and Vice-President of the Vernal Pool Association, a non-profit dedicated to the study, appreciation, and protection of vernal pools.

## Wednesday, April 14, 2021 - 4:00 pm "Fairies, Frogs, and Damsels!" Spring & Summer Wildlife of Vernal Pools: Part 2 With Joy Marzolf Wellesley Conservation Land Trust

Tune in and learn about the spring and summer wildlife that exist in vernal pools. In the spring, vernal pool animals are often in a race against time for survival before the pool dries up during the summer. From fairy shrimp to damselflies, green frogs and painted turtles, learn about these seasonal pools and the many creatures that might inhabit them. A Question and Answer session



Joy Marzolf, former naturalist and educator for over 13 years at Mass Audubon's Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary and now with her own company, <u>The Joys of Nature</u>, will provide the answers to your questions and provide tips for exploring Wellesley's vernal pools.

# Wednesday, April 14, 2021, 7:00 pm On Belonging in Outdoor Spaces With Evelyn Rydz, Artist and Educator



Exploring the vulnerability and the resiliency of natural and cultural ecosystems, Rydz invites viewers and participants of her projects to imagine a different future - one shaped by our connections and care for local and

global communities. Evelyn Rydz creates work across drawing, photography, site-responsive installations and participatory community projects. Her projects explore natural and cultural ecosystems, their vulnerability and resilience, and ways they shape our connections to care, community, and perspectives of home, from local to global. Examples of her participatory community practice include projects inviting participants to share food, recipes, and stories with matriarchal meaning (Comida Casera, since 2016) and mapping and displaying sources of public drinking water, sites of toxic runoff and communities they impact (The Mouth: A Merrimack River Project, 2020). Rydz received an MFA from SMFA at Tufts University and is currently an Associate Professor at Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

This free speaker series will address the challenges and importance of establishing diversity, equity, and inclusion in outdoor spaces, and will feature speakers whose work is advancing efforts to strengthen belonging and connection between communities of color and the

benefits of time in nature. Much of the Greater Boston area is home to world-class trails, conservation land, and expansive farmland. What needs to be done to ensure the benefits of green space are accessible to all? How can we ensure that people of all backgrounds feel welcome and comfortable while enjoying the outdoors? **REGISTER HERE!** 

## Monday, April 19 through Saturday April 24 Annual Earth Day Charles River Cleanup **Charles River Watershed Association** https://www.crwa.org/cleanup.html

Participate in this year's Annual Earth Day Charles River Cleanup with a virtual twist! The Annual Earth Day Charles River Cleanup builds on a national effort as part of American Rivers' National River Cleanup®, which to date, has removed over 25 million pounds of trash from America's waterways. From 2016 to 2019, the Annual Earth Day Charles River Cleanup was recognized by American Rivers for the Most Pounds of Trash Collected and Most Volunteers Mobilized. The cleanup brings together over 3,000 volunteers each year to pick



up litter, remove invasive species and assist with park maintenance along all 80 miles of the Charles River, Residents are drawn to the popular Charles River Cleanup from a desire to give back to their community while enjoying the beauty and wildlife along the river. Volunteers hold onto the connections they establish during this day of stewardship by returning to the Charles to exercise, play and enjoy nature throughout the year.

#### Wednesday, April 24, 2021, 10:00 am - 11:00 am Coffee and Conversation with the Newton Conservators https://newtonconservators.org/events/coffee-and-conversation-with-the-newton-

conservators/



Each week on Wednesdays at 10 am, Newton Parks, Recreation, and Culture (PRC) Department's Over 55 program hosts weekly topics of conversation, quest speakers, entertainment and games. Newton Conservators President, Ted Kuklinski, will be the special quest on Wednesday. CONSERVATORS April 24, 2021 at 10 am on the talk show like program hosted by Nancy Scammon of the PRC

Department. He will talk about all of the wonderful open spaces, parks and opportunities right nere in Newton. Also find out a little more about the Newton Conservators, Newton's own open space and land trust organization celebrating its 60th Anniversary this year!

#### The schedule of topic can be found

at https://newtonma.myrec.com/info/activities/program\_details.aspx?ProgramID=30128 The programs are free but you must register through Zoom at:https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0sdeGhqj4tE91LgPBwDF8WBJUAcgnFr0M9 After you register once, you may attend any or all of the series. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email and a link to join. Call 617-796-1506 for more information.

You might also enjoy a recent interview on YouTube by <u>MassRealty</u> of Ted Kuklinski about the incredible 'Green City' of Newton, Massachusetts, the Newton Conservators organization, and some of the best parks you can enjoy in Newton. Find it here: MassRealty Interview with Ted Kuklinski, President of Newton Conservators.

#### Wednesday, April 28, 2021, 7:00 - 8:00 pm New Naturalism: Lessons from Wild Plant Communities Kelly D. Norris, Author Grow Native Massachusetts - Evenings with Experts Series

We are entering an era of purposeful and thoughtful gardening, where we strive to create landscapes that are both aesthetically beautiful and ecologically vibrant. Wild plant communities are a prime source of inspiration for naturalistic design, and understanding how plants interact and function within these environments is key to establishing successful plantings at any scale. Join author and hort-ecologist Kelly Norris in an exploration of North American wild plant communities and the flora within them. He will share how he interprets native ecosystems in the design of beautiful and functional residential landscapes, with plant layers and palettes defined



by nature, not humans. **<u>REGISTER HERE!</u>** 

Kelly D. Norris is the author of New Naturalism: Designing and Planting a Resilient, Ecologically Vibrant Home Garden (February 2021), and previously served as the Director of Horticulture and Education for the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden.

Sunday,May 2, 2021, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm (Rain or Shine) NewtonSERVES - Outdoor Day of Service <u>https://newtoncommunitypride.org/newtonserves-day-of-community-service/</u>

NewtonSERVES was founded in 2000 by a visionary group of Newton residents who have helped community service become a way of life in Newton. Over 1,000 Newton residents come together in typical years to serve Newton to get our parks and open spaces ready for Spring, to spruce up our schools and not for profit institutions and to contribute food to the Newton food pantries.



Newton Community Pride, in partnership with the City of Newton, is pleased to announce the return of NewtonSERVES in a limited capacity this year. Health and safety of our staff and volunteers is our top priority. Strict adherence to the rules and restrictions for the event allow us to enjoy a day of community service while ensuring we remain compliant with COVID protocols. Project registration (outdoors only) is now open. Volunteer registration will open on April 9.

Newton Conservators will have a number of outdoor Invasive Pull Events as part of NewtonSERVES this year on Sunday, May 2 in both morning and afternoon sessions. Here are some of those sessions. Register for these projects starting Friday, April 9. Watch for further details as we get closer to May.

- May 2 Sun 9:30 9:30 Dolan Pond Conservation Area
- May 2 Sun 9:30 Cold Spring Park
- May 2 Sun 1 3 Blue Heron Bridge
- May 2 Sun 1-3 Houghton Garden

# Newton Conservators Newsletter

Find our latest Spring 2020-2021 Newsletter online at https://newtonconservators.org/newsletters which contains the following interesting and informative articles:

- Full Issue Spring 2021e Spring 2021
- Saving Houghton Pond
- President's Message
- History of Newton Parks, Playgrounds & Recreation: Part 2 Back Story
- Enjoy Nature...with Newton Conservators
- Invasive Pulls



## PLEASE JOIN OR RENEW YOUR NEWTON CONSERVATORS MEMBERSHIP



We would be very grateful for your continued support by joining Newton Conservators or 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.

**CONSERVATORS** You can renew or join the Newton Conservators online at <u>https://newtonconservators.org/renewal-2020/</u>. 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 <u>https://newtonconservators.123signup.com/donation/21167</u>. 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 Houghton Garden, the Riverside Trails Working Group, Trails Fund, and others. As part of the donation process, you can specify a group in the "Comments" section of the form. Thanks so much!

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)

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