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## Saving Houghton Pond

For years, people had been telling me of a beautiful garden with a pond located in the Chestnut Hill section of Newton. At the time, my mother was living with us but was confined to a wheelchair in order to travel any distance. She loved short trips to the outdoors, so we checked out the

Newton Conservators' trail guide to locate Houghton Garden, one of the few open spaces in Newton with an accessible trail then. What a delightful afternoon we had

there, with its beautiful lush green paths, colorful flowers, stone bridges, and lovely vistas, seemingly out of a Thomas Kinkade painting.

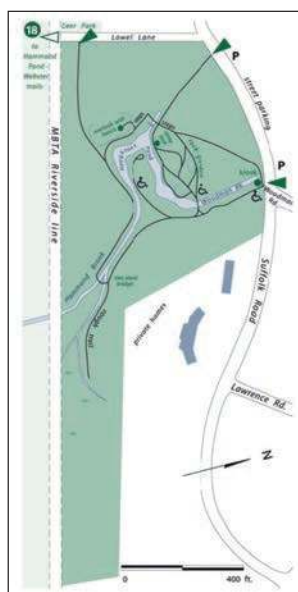
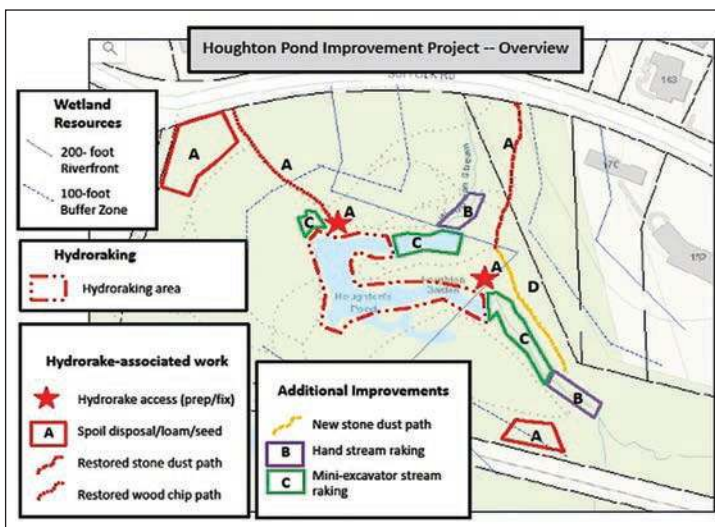
To those who also wish to seek out this "Secret Garden," the Newton Conservators' webpage on Houghton Garden

(<https://newtonconservators.org/property/houghton-garden/>) is a great starting point,

leading to useful maps and a number of articles espousing the rich history, beauty, and nature of this incredibly special peaceful refuge in Newton. There are three entrances:

one at the intersection of Suffolk Road and Woodman Road, one at the junction of Suffolk Road and Clovelly Road, and another on Lowell Lane near the MBTA tracks. All three are in Chestnut Hill with plentiful street parking along Suffolk Road.

The garden was started in 1910 by Martha Gilbert Houghton, who lived in the Spanish mission-style house at 152 Suffolk Road. The garden was acquired by the City of Newton in 1968 via eminent domain, with



Trail guide map off Suffolk Road



Houghton Garden Main Gate

Continued on page 2





Memorial Plaque,  
Photo Ted Kuklinski

another small portion added in 1979, and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999. Our website describes Houghton Garden thusly: *"Its gracious paths, overhung by azalea and rhododendron, wind around a stream and lagoon-like pond... The alpine rock garden on a ledge overlooking Houghton Pond was one of the first of its kind. Especially lovely are the*

*climbing hydrangea, the naturalized lily of the valley, the wood hyacinth, the umbrella pine, and other exotic evergreens."* The ten-acre wild garden was designed by both Martha and Clement Houghton with assistance from Olmsted Associate Warren Manning, who designed the water feature that magically helped create a natural appearance.

Central to the appeal of the garden is Houghton Pond and the streams that flow in and out of it. Over the last century, there was a buildup of vegetative material on the bottom of the pond and overgrowth of the narrow streams, which hindered the flow necessary for a healthy ecosystem. On occasion, the shallower-than-original pond would overflow and flood the area and adjacent paths, which had already suffered significant wear and tear.



Decreased Depth in Houghton Pond



Dam showing reduced depth

As a conservation area, Houghton Garden is under the jurisdiction of the Newton Conservation Commission (ConCom). The Chestnut Hill Garden Club and Friends of Houghton Garden have helped maintain the garden in past years. There were a number of hearings in the spring of 2020 on a plan brought forward by Councilor Lisle Baker among others

to correct the flooding and pathway degradation issues. ConCom has a modest yearly budget for special projects and voted on a plan to clean out the accumulated material at Houghton Pond as one of its 2020 projects.

ConCom elected to go with a special process called hydroraking, which had also been utilized recently at a number of the ponds at the Newton Cemetery. Only one firm in the area, Solitude Lake Management, performs this type of work and had the specialized equipment needed.



PHOTO: LISLE BAKER

Hydroraking in process

The hydroraker is something that might be described as a backhoe with a rake attachment, mounted on a pair of large pontoons, propelled by large independently-rotating paddle wheels used for steering and propulsion. The hydroraker can maneuver anywhere where the water depth is sufficient — about a foot and a half or more. When operating, it scooped up the organic bottom material accumulated on the bottom of the pond over the years into its large rake-like claw, which allowed it to drain the water. It then maneuvered to an access point on the shore, where it deposited the material into a large porous metal container.

From the collection container, the material was transported to another area in Houghton Garden that lacked nutrients in the soil. This location is at the northwest edge of the garden at Lowell Lane and Suffolk Road. When this area was covered, the remaining



PHOTO: TED KUKLINSKI

Disposal Area for Material Removed.





*Transferring Pond Material for Transport*

material will make an ideal base for new plantings in the spring.

The state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) had a few concerns that held up starting the project for a period of time. After a somewhat rainy spring, drought conditions over the summer led to insufficient water levels for the hydroraking equipment. In the northeast corner of the garden, there is a stone and concrete dam which restricts the flow of the streams with a board system, thus creating



*Hydroraker near dam*

the pond itself. When the rains came in the fall, an unknown visitor to the pond literally pulled the plug on the project by removing the wooden boards at the dam that had been installed to raise the water level. But eventually with boards locked in place, the pond was full enough

again, the hydroraker had a window of time available, and the actual pond work began in late November. They made great progress, even as the weather turned colder into December, but there was concern that the pond would freeze over. At the end of the hydroraking workdays allocated for the work, it was discovered that there was the option of removing a little more depth of accumulated material in the pond. Since the equipment was in place and additional funds became available, the pond was able to be cleaned to the bottommost layer, with work taking place almost up to Christmas through a major snowstorm!

material was enough to fill an old swimming pool within the nearby “old deer park” area, also under ConCom jurisdiction. The rich pond-bottom

Additional tree work, planting, and path restoration work is planned for the spring.

The hydroraking access preparation, disposal, and pathway work were not in ConCom’s budget, but thanks to a generous neighborhood fundraising effort organized by Ken Lyons, John Grandin, and Fred Hochberg of the Chestnut Hill Association (CHA), the other components of the project were contracted to respected local landscape firm, Robert Hanss, Inc. Councilor Baker also helped facilitate this effort with the neighbors, the ConCom, and the Conservators. For this portion of the project, Newton Conservators was able to accept donations into a dedicated fund and coordinate with Newton’s Environmental Planner, Jennifer Steel, and CHA in monitoring and inspecting the work performed.



*Accessible Path and Cleared Stream*

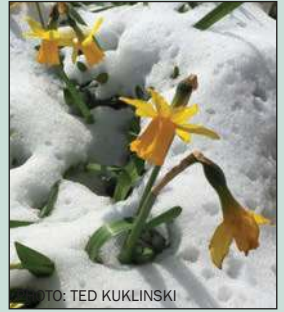
Visitors will appreciate additional improvements to the garden. New special access paths were constructed and restored after the hydroraking equipment was removed. The streams into and out of the pond itself were trimmed back and dug out manually during the summer. In addition, a beautiful new accessible stone dust path was constructed extending beyond the previous path.

Mrs. Houghton would likely be pleased to see her garden still being used and appreciated so long after its inception and now, with its channels and pond cleaned out, for another 100 years! Changes are still afoot as the Chestnut Hill Garden Club will shortly concentrate on highlighting the rock garden section of the Garden. Whether you want to meditate on nature, exercise, walk your dog on leash, take pictures, or watch birds, Houghton Garden is a special place worth seeking out! ♦

— Ted Kuklinski

# President's Message

While I'm writing this, snow is falling again – not a big snow, but another few inches, and I'm glad for it. What a wonderful winter for photography, finding animal tracks in the snow, ice skating on some of the safe ponds, and dusting off the cross-country skis or snowshoes for an invigorating trip around the local park. The bitter temps have subsided, and robin sightings are more frequent. On occasion you may hear the “cheer, cheer” spring song of the cardinals. We have to believe that under the snow are crocuses and daffodils just waiting for the right moment to make their appearance and give us proof that life will persist in its annual cycle.



*Daffodils*

In Newton, the Garden City, we tend to take the presence of our green open spaces and playgrounds as a given. In his continuing series, Michael Clarke outlines the fascinating story of how many of our beloved parks came to be from the late 19th to the early 20th century. One of most beautiful open spaces, Houghton Garden, underwent some important restoration work last fall, which is also detailed in this issue. Substituting for our canceled Spring Walk Series and following up on the great success of last fall's inaugural Webinar Series, Beth Wilkinson has put together another great lineup, starting in April, with local experts on vernal pools, Cold Spring Park birding and exploration, and timely sessions on planting for pollinators.

And if you are looking for a way to volunteer, please consider joining our invasive removal team under the tutelage of Katherine Howard, who continues to lead this important work in a socially distanced fashion. On a related note, Councilor Alicia Bowman has initiated a working group to explore a possible pollinator policy and plan for the City and to provide information on suitable plantings to support pollination. Our website may soon be a repository for information on desirable pollinator plants as it has been for the undesirable invasive ones. And Councilor Alison Leary is working on a multi-community “adopt-a-space” initiative to deal with invasives and trash along the Charles River. Recently, Newton Conservators lent their support for a new DCR redesign of Hammond Pond Parkway that includes a multi-use path. Watch for further developments in all these great initiatives.

Due to the pandemic, slower rollout of vaccine, and continuing need for distancing precautions, our annual meeting, scheduled for May, has sadly been postponed again. It has been rescheduled for Wednesday, October 27, at the American Legion Nonantum Post 440 in celebration of our 60th Anniversary, with dinner, in-person awards, and an engaging speaker. In a new twist, we will be streaming it online for those not present in person! And this year, we may try additional interactive meetings on Zoom for our membership.



*Breslyn Clinton*

Last spring, when the pandemic began, inspirational and colorful painted rocks began appearing along the trails at Dolan Pond Conservation Area. A photo of her rock “WE WILL BE OK” was featured in Mayor Fuller's weekly message then and more recently in her annual “State of the City” address. We were so pleased to learn that the artist in question was a third grader by the name of Breslyn, who wanted to spread some joy in an open space area adjacent to her home.



*Message of hope*

Please don't take our wonderful open space for granted. Get out and enjoy it as it returns to a lush green in the aptly named miracle known as Spring!

All the best,

*Ted Kuklinski*

Ted Kuklinski  
President, Newton Conservators

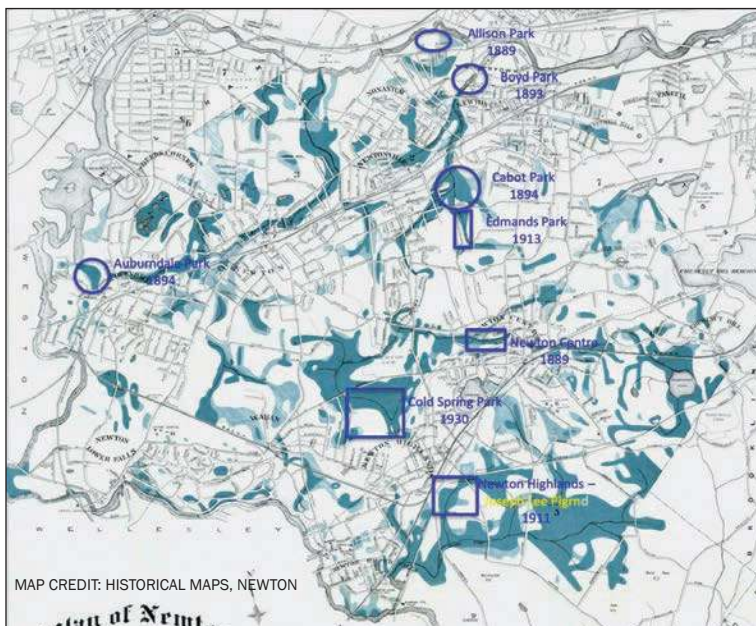


# History of Newton Parks, Playgrounds & Recreation:

## Part 2. The Back Story

**Editor's Note:** This is the second in series of articles by board member Michael J. Clarke about Newton parks, playgrounds & recreation. The extensive references and a list of Newton parks and playgrounds prior to 1912 is available on the Newton Conservators' website <https://newtonconservators.org/newsletters>.

By the 1890s, the early and later waves of German Turnvereins, Swedish gymnasts and other groups had fostered an environment for physical education and gymnasia throughout the country.<sup>1</sup> Middle and upper class residents also sought to stave off the undesirable aspects of expanding cities, such as crime, congestion, and poverty,<sup>2</sup> by preserving natural landscapes and establishing playgrounds. In Newton, parks and playgrounds rose from both the aesthetic Parks Movement of the late 1800s and the child-centered Playground Movement of the early twentieth century. As we shall see in subsequent episodes, these merged partly in the Playground Commission in 1912 and finally into the Parks and Recreation Commission in 1982. This segment of our serial history of Parks and Recreation in Newton reviews the



1892 map of areas requiring drainage showing coincidence of many parks with earlier wetlands

early acquisition of land for parks and playgrounds prior to 1912.

The Parks Movement followed the construction of Central Park in New York and resulted from the desire to maintain green open spaces, often landscaped, as cities expanded.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, between January of 1883 and June of 1884, there was considerable debate in Newton about establishing a “Central Park” that would have included Bullough’s Pond.<sup>4</sup> Another outstanding example is Boston’s Emerald

Necklace of parks. The children’s Playground Movement derived in Europe from Rousseau’s ideas that interacting with the natural world through play was necessary for the development of children and allowed their ‘natural inclinations’ to emerge.<sup>5-6</sup>

In Boston, the first playground structures were sand piles inspired by the visit of Dr. Marie Zakerzewska, a Boston physician, to Berlin in 1895,<sup>6-8</sup> but these were soon followed by swings, slides, and climbing structures.<sup>6,9-10</sup> By the early 1900s, the increasing popularity of baseball<sup>7,11-12</sup> and later football provided stimulus for playing fields. Similar to today’s Community Preservation Act, the landmark 1908 Massachusetts Playground Law required every city, which accepted its provisions, to have and maintain at least one playground.<sup>13-14</sup>

**Early Years.** The oldest park in Newton is Newton Centre Green, which was set aside in colonial times (~1726). The next oldest is Grafton Park (1859), a street triangle at the intersection of Homer and Grafton Streets. Kenrick Park, a 0.72 acre street oval in Newtonville was constructed around 1845, which was followed by the Walnut Park and Waban Park ovals in 1847.<sup>15</sup> The next is another street median, Washington Park in Newtonville, which is about one acre

Current Name	Year	Acres	Original Name
Farlow Park	1883	3.76	Farlow Park
Richard J. Forte Memorial Park	1889	5	Allison Park Playground
Newton Centre Playground	1889	17.9	Newton Centre Playground (16.41 acres)
Boyd Park	1893	6.06	Boyd Park Playground
Cabot Park	1894	11.6	Cabot Park Playground (14 acres)
Auburndale Park	1894	28.81	Auburndale Park (9.53 acre, 1914)
Lower Falls Park	1894	46	Lower Falls Park
Claflin Playground	1906	6.43	Claflin Field Playground
West Newton Commons Playgrnd	1909	3.63	West Newton Playgrnd, John Weeks Playgrnd
Offr. Robert Braceland Playgrnd	1909	6.93	Upper Falls Playground
Joseph Lee Playground	1911	4.28	Newton Highlands Playground
Lower Falls Playground	1911	8.57	Lower Falls Playground

Taken from Johnson, C.F. Minutes of the Playground Commission April 24, 1912

Continued on page 6

and was donated in 1868. Carpenter Park, 0.3 acres at the junction of Crafts and Waltham Streets, was donated in 1869.<sup>16</sup> Islington Park was acquired<sup>17</sup> in 1872, and land around it was donated for an Auburndale park in 1873, but the City failed to develop it, and it was reclaimed by the donors.<sup>18</sup> Loring Park, a parcel of about 0.69 acres, opposite Boston College on Centre St., was acquired in 1884.

**Improvement Associations:** In 1852, The Newton Center Tree Club, one of the first neighborhood improvement associations in America, was formed to plant trees to beautify the city including the planting of Newton Centre Green. At its formation in 1878, the Newton Centre Improvement Association was charged to “improve and ornament the streets and public grounds of the locality.”<sup>2,19</sup> Similar associations arose in Newton’s villages<sup>2,20</sup> to preserve the ambiance of their communities and market them by presenting their villages as desirable home sites for people working in Boston. Newton’s Improvement Associations planted trees and donated street triangles, public parks, and playgrounds such as Lowell Park, Newton Centre Playground and Upper Falls Playground.

**Farlow Park:** In his address to the City Council in 1881, Mayor Royal M. Pulsifer referred to prior efforts, when Newton was a town, to establish a system of public parks and to his 1880 recommendation that the City Council do the same. As a result of this effort, John S. Farlow communicated to the City Council his desire to donate a tract of land described as “a wretched and unsightly bog”<sup>21</sup> in the populous part of Ward 1 for public uses.<sup>22</sup> Although much of the survey work had been done, because of difficulties in working out the enabling legislation with the state legislature, establishment of the park was delayed until 1885.<sup>23-25</sup>

## Parks Movement & Farlow Park



*Farlow Park around 1900, photo courtesy of Jackson Homestead. Painting from Newton Free Library (M.J. Clarke)*

In 1882 under the auspices of the City Council, Newton established its first standing committee on parks,<sup>26</sup> which submitted a report two years later.<sup>25</sup> As a result of this movement, the state legislature passed a law authorizing the City to take land for parks and squares.<sup>27</sup> In 1884, Lincoln and Walcott parks were donated to the city.<sup>28</sup> Expanding on a previous proposal for a series of parks between Chestnut

Hill and West Newton, the committee recommended the acquisition of almost 400 acres extending from Valentine to Centre Streets, between Beacon Street and Bullough’s Pond, for a single “Central Park.”<sup>25</sup>

**Playgrounds:** In 1889 Mayor Heman M. Burr noted that the enabling state act of 1882 for Newton to take land for parks did not include playgrounds.<sup>29-30</sup> Recalling a time when every vacant lot and pasture was a playground, Burr remarked that the boys of Newton were then “driven from one field to another by the steadily advancing tide of increasing population, until there is little left to them but the public streets.”<sup>30</sup> In 1888, the President of the Massachusetts

## Newton Centre Playground 1897



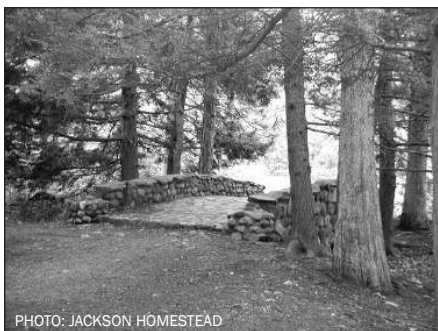
From 1897 Newton Centre Map

Senate, Robert R. Bishop, proposed a playground to the Neighbors’ Club at Newton Centre,<sup>31</sup> and the Newton Centre Improvement Association later provided funds for the city’s first public playground.<sup>32</sup> Newton Centre Playground was initially designed by the landscape firm of Frederick Law Olmsted in 1890,<sup>33</sup> but a member of the firm, Herbert J. Kellaway, took over the design when he established his own firm and submitted a revised plan in 1908.<sup>34</sup> The playground was later named the William C. Brewer Playground after the organizer and first chair of the Playground Commission.<sup>35</sup> The City Council subsequently provided \$10,000 for the Newton Centre Playground,<sup>34</sup> and the mayor encouraged the development of other playgrounds.<sup>36</sup> The half acre at Centre and Bowen Streets was added in 1897.

The state Metropolitan Park Commission was established in 1892 to develop parks, especially along the rivers in and around Boston. The first land acquired by that commission was Hemlock Gorge in Newton Upper Falls.<sup>25</sup>

In 1893, Newton acquired four separate areas for parks and playgrounds: 1) Cabot Park, 14 acres in Newtonville containing Laundry Brook;<sup>37</sup> 2) Auburndale Park, 30 acres





*Auburndale Park*

house and walking trails; 3) Boyd Park, which extends into Watertown and included a mill pond that was drained within a few years; 4) 42 acres on the Charles in Lower Falls including a high bluff overlooking the river with “the finest growth of pine” in Newton. In 1894, the city gained two small parcels (Cronin and Levingston Coves) of Crystal Lake shoreline.<sup>25</sup> In 1889, five acres in Nonantum along the Charles was acquired from the heirs of John S. Allison, a farmer, for Allison Playground (now Forte Park).<sup>38-39</sup> The “grand boulevard” of Commonwealth Avenue was laid out and four miles partially constructed in 1894.<sup>40</sup>

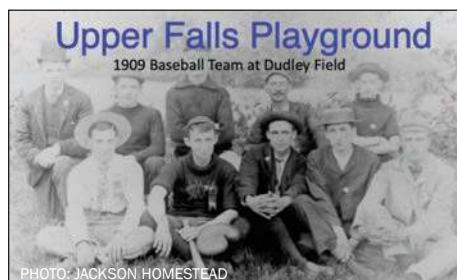
In 1897, Mayor Henry E. Cobb, called for the acquisition of Bullough’s Pond, which the owners donated the following year. The dell below Dexter Road was laid out as a park and the pond over-flow was guided over ledges and boulders to create a rustic effect.<sup>41-42</sup> The 3.4 acres of Stearns Park in Nonantum were added in 1906.

For many years, it was the responsibility of the Street Department to supervise and manage Newton’s parks and playgrounds along with tree planting and maintenance; but this eventually required more effort than the Street Department could manage. Tree and forest maintenance, which were taken very seriously, were also recognized to be substantially different than playground management.<sup>4</sup> Because of insect damage caused to the city’s trees, the Forestry Department was created in 1908 and was charged

of the Ware Farm in Auburndale on Ware’s Cove along the Charles River, which was soon developed for mixed recreation with ball fields, picnic tables, fireplaces, swings and sandboxes, a bath/skate

with not only planting and caring for the city’s trees, but also the maintenance, care and management of parks, playgrounds and cemeteries.<sup>25, 43-45</sup>

In 1909, three new parcels were given to the city for parks including Nye Park (1.09 acres) near the Auburndale Railroad Station (both of which disappeared with the



*Upper Falls Playground*

of the Mason School<sup>46</sup> from 1901 to 1959, and the latter was absorbed into the Weeks Jr. High Playground in the 1930s.

In 1909, the Upper Falls Improvement Society donated \$4500, raised from subscriptions and entertainments, to the City to purchase Dudley Field, a hayfield where baseball had been played since the 1880s,<sup>47</sup> between Chestnut Street and the river.<sup>12</sup> A 1910 design plan was prepared by Boston landscape architect Herbert J. Kellaway, but only the baseball diamond seems to have been placed according to the plan.<sup>48</sup> A section from the Marcy property was added in 1924.<sup>47</sup>

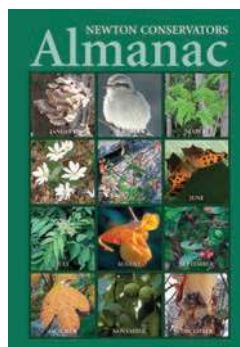
In 1910, the Forestry Department developed West Newton Common at Elm and Webster streets into a playground.<sup>25</sup> Newton Highlands Playground<sup>49</sup> was established in 1911 and was later named after Joseph Lee, “the father of the playground movement in America.”<sup>35, 50-51</sup> The Forestry Department also began flooding a part of Cabot Park and the Burr School yard for skating,<sup>49</sup> and the following year it did the same at Boyd Park.<sup>52</sup>

Michael J. Clarke

## Spring’s coming. Get outside!

*Shop online at [newtonconservators.org/publications/](http://newtonconservators.org/publications/) to purchase Newton Conservators’ publications. The Almanac is \$19.95 + shipping, and the Trail Guide is \$8.95 + shipping.*

- Members receive a discount from these prices when purchasing online.
- New members receive a trail guide free with their first membership.



# Enjoy Nature... with 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 [NewtonConservators.org](https://www.newtonconservators.org). 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.**



PHOTO: BARBARA BATES

*Exploring a vernal pool.*

## Wednesday, April 7, 2021 ... Vernal Pools

Seasonal ponds — known as vernal pools — are full of life right now and can be found throughout our area. Bare Pond and Dolan Pond are two examples. Discover how these pools form and the many wonderful adaptations that allow the invertebrates and amphibians that inhabit these ephemeral pools to survive in the low oxygen water. See fairy shrimp, salamanders, wood frogs, and many more. We will also describe the commonly available materials you need if you want to try your hand at seeing these interesting creatures up close and personal. Presented by Barbara Bates, teacher, naturalist and Newton Conservators' board member.

**Sign up:** <https://bit.ly/3k0vyoe>

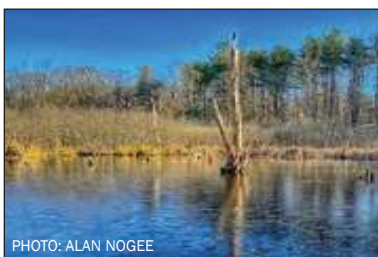


PHOTO: ALAN NOGEE

*Vernal pool in Cold Spring Park.*

## Wednesday, May 5, 2021 ... Exploring Cold Spring Park

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. Presented by Alan Noguee, a mostly retired career environmentalist who worked as the Clean Energy Program Director for the Union of Concerned Scientists and is the President of The Friends of Cold Spring Park.

**Sign up:** <https://bit.ly/3sawOHZ>



PHOTO: PETE GILMORE

*Black and White Warbler.*

## Wednesday, May 12, 2021 ... Spring Birds in Cold Spring Park

Since one can easily access photos of the common resident birds by going to the Newton Conservators' web site and watching the fall webinar on birds in Cold Spring Park, we will focus on the colorful migrant and summer birds of Cold Spring 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 wood warbler sounds and field marks can be a challenge. This webinar will provide a decent start on that project. Presented by Pete Gilmore, who serves on the boards of Newton Conservators and the Brookline Bird Club. **Sign up:** <https://bit.ly/2ZoSFzb>





PHOTO: BETH WILKINSON

*Bumblebee on butterfly weed.*

## Wednesday, May 19, 2021 ... Planting for Pollinators

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. Presented by Beth Wilkinson, who serves on the Newton Conservators' board, was trained as a Master Gardener and has a certificate in field botany.

**Sign up:** <https://bit.ly/2ZnMkns>



PHOTO: ERIC OLSON

*Red admiral butterfly on goldenrod.*

## Wednesday, June 2, 2021 ... Pollinator Meadow-Making at Brandeis University: Lessons 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. 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. This webinar will reflect on lessons learned. The talk is supplemented by an annotated bibliography of how-to books, articles, websites, and videos, and also lists local organizations ready to help homeowners, schools, parks, and others to do their part supporting native bees and butterflies. Presented by Eric Olson, who recently retired from Brandeis University, where he taught Field Biology and other courses for many years. **Sign up:** <https://bit.ly/3bk1vny>



## RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP OR JOIN TODAY!

**YES, count me in! I want to be a nature steward and help Newton Conservators protect and preserve the natural areas in our community.**

**Please renew/accept my tax-deductible membership at the level checked below:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Directors' Circle | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Family Membership           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$125 Patron            | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Individual Membership       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Donor             | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Student Membership          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Sustaining Member  | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Contribution \$ _____ |

**Want to make an even bigger impact?  
Help us support these special funds:**

Woodcock Meadow \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Trails Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Ordway Endowment Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Land Stewardship Areas \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(Dexter Rd., Bracebridge Rd.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

All new members receive *Walking Trails in Newton's Parks and Conservation Lands*.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would like to volunteer!  
*Please email me.*

Please make checks payable to Newton Conservators, Inc. and send to P.O. Box 590011, Newton Centre, MA 02459, or visit [newtonconservators.org/membership/](http://newtonconservators.org/membership/) to renew or join online. Consider including Newton Conservators in your estate planning. Contact us at [president@NewtonConservators.org](mailto:president@NewtonConservators.org).

# 🌿 Invasive Pulls 🌿

**I**nvasive plant sessions in 2021 will once again be conducted by our small but intrepid Invasives Team. Due to the continuing covid situation, we have decided to not publish the schedule in the newsletter and to instead manage the sessions by email. If you wish to be added to the email list for the invasives sessions or have any questions or suggestions, please contact Katherine Howard at [katherineh998@gmail.com](mailto:katherineh998@gmail.com) or 617-721-2571.

Individual efforts are also important, and welcomed. It can be quite relaxing and therapeutic to spend an hour pulling invasives. In particular, garlic mustard, the focus of our spring removal efforts, is easy and fun to pull (for all ages), and it is in many backyards and neighborhoods. It has overwintered green under the snow cover, ready to shoot up flower stalks in April-May. For more information see the new invasives section of our website, found under Resources: <https://newtonconservators.org/garlic-mustard/>

## About the Plant Invaders



**Garlic Mustard** Lush groundcover with 1-3' stalk with pretty little white flowers at top. Antler-like seed pods then grow large. Base leaves and first year plant leaves are rounded; leaves up the stalk are heart shaped. If unchecked will carpet an area and crowd out native species; has alleopathic properties chemically altering the soil to harm native species. Biennial with roundish leaves on first year plants and producing flower stalks in 2nd year. Seed pods have hundreds to thousands more seed which are released in mid to late summer or early fall (the sunnier the spot the earlier the dispersal). Seeds can last 5 or more years in the ground seed bank.



**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.

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

### MISSION

#### Newton Conservators, Inc.

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.

*The Newton Conservators was formed as a not-for-profit organization 60 years ago in June 1961.*

**The Newton Conservators' Newsletter**® is published four times each year by the Newton Conservators, Inc., in June, September, December, and March. Deadlines for these issues are the second Friday of the month before the issue is published.

We welcome material related to our mission from any source. Send proposed articles or letters by email in MS Word or rich text format to [articles@newtonconservators.org](mailto:articles@newtonconservators.org). Digitized photographs, maps and diagrams are also welcome.

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Thanks to the following contributors to this edition of the Newsletter: Ted Kuklinski, Michael Clarke, Beth Wilkinson & Katherine Howard.



## Do You Use Amazon for Purchases for your Home or Business?



As explained in past newsletters, Amazon Smile is a program through which Amazon donates 0.5% of most purchases (yes, \$5 of every \$1000) to a nonprofit (501c3) organization of your choice (the Newton Conservators, we hope!).

How does one use Amazon Smile? Instead of going to Amazon.com, you go to [Smile.amazon.com](http://Smile.amazon.com). On your first visit, you will be asked to choose a nonprofit organization to receive the bonus donation. Enter "Newton Conservators," and you are ready to go. The rest of your shopping proceeds exactly the same as if you had logged in to Amazon.com initially.

**Even with relatively few members using the program so far, the rewards have grown. For the first quarter we participated in 2014, we received \$22.32. In 2018, we received \$171.04, and it has now grown to \$100 per quarter.**

If you have any further questions about the program, check the FAQ page: <http://smile.amazon.com/about>.

## Bird Drawings by Suzette Durso

To see more of this artist's work, visit [www.gallerytwist.com](http://www.gallerytwist.com) where you can find all of her bird drawings. Questions can be directed to [suzedurso@aol.com](mailto:suzedurso@aol.com). Works by this artist and others can be found in the artist's section of our website at <https://newtonconservators.org/artists-look-at-nature-in-newton/>



*Blackburnian Warbler*



*Scarlet Tanager*



*Great-horned Owl*



*Pileated Woodpecker*



*Black-and-white Warbler*



*Black-throated Green Warbler*



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# NEWSLETTER

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



SPRING ISSUE

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**Fox Sparrow**  
*photo by Haynes Miller*

**Go Green!** ...and all the other colors of the rainbow. You can view this newsletter at [newtonconservators.org/newsletters](https://newtonconservators.org/newsletters). To elect not to receive a paper copy of the newsletter, update your membership profile at [newtonconservators.org/membership](https://newtonconservators.org/membership)