NEWTON CONSERVATORS
FALL ISSUE

NEWSLETTER

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

NEWTONCONSERVATORS.ORG • FALL 2022

Are Pollinators Being Supported in Newton?

By Richard B. Primack (a life-long Newton resident and professor at Boston University), Selby Vaughn, and Katia Landauer (Boston University undergraduates)

Is Newton — replete with public open spaces, private landscapes, and ever more pollinator gardens — adequately supporting its native pollinators? Are non-native European honeybees competing with or harming our native insect pollinators? The City of Newton is asking these questions as it considers new regulations that would restrict honeybee numbers on public and private land. The questions emerge from two interrelated activities.

Pollinator garden at Wellington Park; Richard and Selby making observations

Honeybee visiting milkweed flowers

First, the Newton Conservators and the City of Newton, among others, are establishing pollinator gardens in public places and encouraging homeowners to plant native wildflowers favored by native insects. These gardens are intended to support native pollinators that are declining in Newton and elsewhere in the region and around the world. In particular, certain native bumblebee species are declining, with three of the remaining species at risk of disappearing from Massachusetts over the next decade.

Second, some residents keep honeybee hives on their properties. For them, keeping honeybees is a satisfying, educational, and delicious hobby. Some beekeepers have permission to keep multiple hives on public land in Newton, in part because of their educational value.

A group of researchers from Boston University, Tufts University, and University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth meet in Newton Centre to discuss bees and pollinator gardens.

However, some residents are concerned that native pollinators and non-native honeybees might be competing for flowers. Will masses of honeybees consume most of the floral nectar and pollen the native insects need to survive?

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A carpenter bee visits coastal pepperbush flowers in Webster Woods.

To help answer these questions, from June to August 2022, during a period of drought, we (the authors and our colleagues) systematically visited Newton's natural areas, pollinator gardens, community vegetable gardens, public ornamental gardens, private gardens, and vacant lots to determine what flowers native insects are visiting and whether honeybees are competing with native pollinators (or more precisely, flower visitors). We recorded the types of pollinators visiting flowers: non-native honeybees and native insects, including bumblebees, small, medium, and large solitary bees (almost all of which are native), large carpenter bees, wasps, skipper butterflies, other butterfly species, beetles, syrphid flies, and other types of flies.

What plants do pollinators visit?

Not surprisingly, we found the most pollinators in places with lots of flowers. The biggest displays of flowers were primarily non-native plants, often cultivated, on private and public property. There were some native and non-native plants flowering in Newton's forests and fields during summer months, mostly along the Charles River, wet meadow habitats, and in disturbed edges of fields.

We surveyed more than 300 plant species and found that just a few plant species accounted for a surprisingly large proportion of the flowers visited by insects. Honeybees, native bumblebees, and solitary bees were found on dozens of different plant species, but the greatest numbers visited flowers of non-native species like white clover, privet, catnip, Japanese spirea, and purple loosestrife. Large numbers of pollinators also visited some native plants, such as buttonbush, coastal pepperbush, winterberry, Joe Pye weed, and goldenrods.

A tiger swallowtail settles on Joe Pye weed at Wellington Park.

In contrast, we found that few insects visit the extensive floral displays of many ornamental plants, such as petunias, zinnias, and day lilies, planted throughout Newton. And aside from scattered skippers and occasional tiger swallowtails and spicebush swallowtails, we saw surprisingly few other butterfly species visiting flowers, perhaps due to dearth of appropriate nectar sources, the effects of the drought, or competition with honeybees and other native pollinators. The only common butterfly we observed was the non-native cabbage butterfly.

Honeybees and native insects

Honeybee hives at Nahanton Park

We expected plants growing near apiaries with numerous honeybee hives at Nahanton Park and the Old Deer Park in Hammond Woods to be visited in a much greater proportion by honeybees. But instead, plants near hives were visited by similar mixtures of pollinators to plants growing farther away from honeybee hives. And the fact that mixtures of honeybees, bumblebees, and other native insects were found visiting both native plants and non-native plants suggests that honeybees are not so severely depleting the floral resources that other pollinators are excluded. However, it remains to be seen if native pollinators would be more abundant with reduced honeybee densities.

Cabbage Butterfly on Winterberry

Honeybee enthusiasts estimate that there are around 25 apiaries in Newton, most of which are in homeowners' backyards. Considering that honeybees have a foraging range of about two miles, honeybees flying from hives scattered around Newton can reach every part of the city. Native bees tend to live in holes in open undisturbed ground, so their homes are also likely dispersed around the city, and larger ones like bumblebees can fly at least half a mile.

Benefits of pollinator gardens and best practices

Newton has a growing number of public and private pollinator gardens, which, when done well, provide pollen and nectar for some native pollinators. Pollinator gardens at Newton City Hall and Wellington Park in West Newton

A great black wasp visits swamp milkweed flowers at Wellington Park.

and the All-America Selections garden at the Newton Centre parking lot have an abundance of bumblebees and other native insects visiting flowers, including large solitary wasps. There were also many honeybees on the flowers.

Public flower displays and private and community gardens also provide important flower resources for pollinators, because the plants are often large, well-watered, and flower abundantly. Ornamental plants such as coneflowers, catnip, and penstemons and the flowers of cultivated plants such as raspberries and coriander attracted many insect visitors.

At some parks, pollinators were active in the pollinator gardens, but there were few flowers elsewhere in the park. This emphasizes important points about the value of pollinator gardens. To be most effective, these gardens have to be maintained and watered, or else like the pollinator garden in Kennard Park, the plants stop flowering. Also, more pollinator gardens and larger gardens need to be developed on both public and private lands as they currently represent only the tiniest fraction of Newton's area.

A bumblebee visits sundrops in a private garrden.

Professor Rob Gegear (University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth) argues that the small list of plant species found in most pollinator gardens neglects the broader needs of the most threatened native pollinators. Instead of planting a few species that attract large numbers of common bumblebees and honeybees, he advocates for maximizing native plant-pollinator interactions, including endangered insect species, by planting a wider variety of native plants such as hairy penstemon, heal-all, giant St. Johnswort, and purple flowering raspberry.

It is also important to consider the full life cycle of the insect pollinators. Gardens should include diverse plants with high quality nectar and pollen sources, including those that flower during the spring, host plants for the larval and caterpillar stages of insects, and adjacent habitats with undisturbed soil and overwintering stems where native bees can nest. (Dr. Gegear's list of plants that meet these requirements can be found at https://gegearlab.weebly.com/plant-list.html)

Additional strategies

To promote more flowers that could benefit pollinators, homeowners and the City could mow lawns and fields less frequently so that native plants, such as milkweeds, goldenrods, and asters have a chance to flower. Or better yet, they could set aside edges of yards and fields as unmown pollinator habitat. Planting native wildflower meadows along with pollinator gardens could increase the amount of flowers in parks and other areas. The City could also stop or greatly restrict the use of herbicides and pesticides to treat lawns and playing fields. The application of herbicides to fields both reduces the abundance of flowers available to pollinators and directly kills ground-nesting insects, like many native bees.

Our observations of similar mixtures of honeybees, bumblebees, and solitary bees on flowers throughout Newton suggests that native pollinator populations are often visiting the same kinds of flowers as honeybees. It remains unknown how native pollinator populations would change if the number of honeybee hives increased or decreased. In addition to regulating honeybee hives, Newton residents and the City should also consider protecting, managing, and expanding flower and habitat resources, including larger and more diverse pollinator gardens, that native pollinators need in order to thrive.

Bumblebees swarm an ornamental onion plant in a private garden.

The authors thank Robert Gegear, Nick Dorian (Tufts University), Jennifer Steel and Ellen Menounos (City of Newton), and Beth Wilkinson for advice in writing this article.

For additional resources:

https://sites.tufts.edu/pollinators/planting-guides/
https://newtonconservators.org/pollinator-toolkit/
https://gegearlab.weebly.com/beecology.html ◆

Beautiful but Destructive: The Invasive Spotted Lanternfly

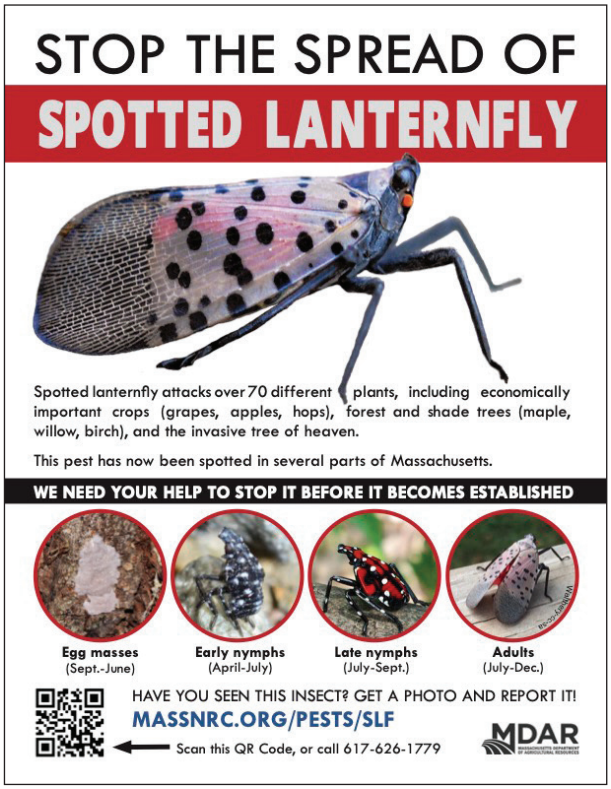
By Elizabeth Barnes, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

In the past few years, a brightly colored insect, the spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*; SLF), has been appearing in seemingly disconnected counties across the country.

Spotted lanternflies feed on over 100 different types of plants including grape, tree-of-heaven, black walnut, and maple.

Once its population builds up, this bug harms grape, maple, and over 100 other plants, and leaves a sticky, smelly, and sugary mess in its wake. It's bad news for anyone who likes a relaxing morning on their porch, runs a pick-your-own orchard, or anyone else who spends time outdoors. But where did spotted lanternflies come from? And how can we stop them?

How to Recognize Spotted Lanternflies

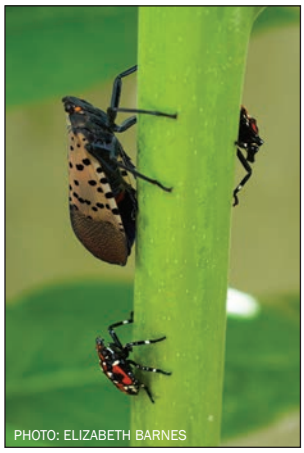


Spotted lanternfly's appearance changes a lot over the course of its life. Right now (July-November), they are in their adult stage. Adult lanternflies have two sets of wings. The ones on top are grey wings with black spots, and the ones underneath ("hindwings") are marked with a red patch. Spotted lanternflies have yellow abdomens with black stripes.

Adult lanternflies mate in late summer, and females then lay two or more egg masses, each containing 30 to 50 eggs. These egg masses can be found on any flat surface kept outside and stay intact through the winter. In the spring (May-June), the egg masses hatch out into round, tiny black nymphs with white spots. The nymphs retain this appearance through their first three developmental stages, or "instars," but their final nymphal stage (July-September) is bright red with black and white patches. All spotted lanternfly nymphs and adults are strong jumpers and may quickly leap away when startled.

If you think you've seen a spotted lanternfly, don't panic! There are many harmless, native look-alikes that are often confused with SLF. Take a picture and send in a report (https://massnrc.org/pests/slf). Insect experts at the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources will review your report.

How Spotted Lanternflies Spread



Spotted lanternfly life stages can overlap. Here an adult and a nymph (juvenile stage) rest on the same plant stem.

Spotted lanternflies were accidentally introduced into the United States around 2014 on stone imported into Pennsylvania. Since then, it has proved to be an accomplished hitchhiker. SLF has been found in many states in the Northeast, Midwest, and South. While spotted lanternflies were accidentally transported into Massachusetts many times, most of these instances have involved dead adults.

Unfortunately, we now have three known populations of spotted lanternflies in our state (https://bit.ly/MDARPestDashboard): two satellite populations in Fitchburg and Shrewsbury, and a slightly

larger infestation in Springfield. Adults, juveniles, and egg masses can be transported on anything kept outside including cars, nursery stock, trucks, and firewood. Egg masses can be particularly difficult to find as they resemble a splash of mud or lichen. To slow its spread, great care must be taken to inspect for these insects before anything is transported out of an infested area, or to check any materials received from locations known to have spotted lanternflies.

How Spotted Lanternflies Impact Plants

Spotted lanternfly isn't picky about what it eats, but it does have some favorite plants and will shift food sources over the course of the summer. While SLF can be found on grape and tree-of-heaven throughout the year, young insects spend the spring focusing on thin-barked plants like roses, perennials, and small maples. As summer progresses and they grow larger, they switch to bigger trees like maples, birches, willows, and walnuts.

While the impact of spotted lanternflies on trees is still being studied, initial results suggest that their effect depends on the number of lanternflies present, the species of plants under attack, and the health of those plants. Plant damage typically occurs once SLF populations hit high numbers. One or two lanternflies feeding on a plant aren't likely to harm it, but hundreds of them can cause problems. Unfortunately, large spotted lanternfly populations are common in states that have been dealing with this pest for several years.

Spotted lanternflies cluster together on a tree-of-heaven trunk in Springfield, MA.

Spotted lanternflies feed on over 100 different plant species, but only kills or seriously weakens three: grape, tree-of-heaven (an invasive plant), and black walnut. Vineyard owners have reported die-off of healthy grape vines after a single season of spotted lanternfly feeding, and anecdotal information in Pennsylvania suggests wild grape is being impacted as well. Tree-of-heaven and black walnut can both also be killed by high levels of SLF feeding, but only when they are saplings. Most other species of plants are only stressed by spotted lanternfly feeding. This is unlikely to seriously harm the plant but can become an issue if it becomes stressed by another source like disease or drought. You can help keep your trees and plants healthy by checking them over a few times a year and learning what type of care is best for your trees (e.g., watering, pruning, etc.). Some signs that your tree is struggling include wilting, branch die back, holes in the bark, and mushrooms growing out of the trunk.

How Spotted Lanternflies Impact Quality of Life

In addition to harming plants, spotted lanternflies are also considered a nuisance pest. Their swarming behavior can be unpleasant for people who don't like insects, but the honeydew they produce causes the biggest problems. Honeydew is essentially sticky, sugary insect "pee" — a waste product produced by the lanternflies as they feed on the sap of the plant. Most gardeners are already familiar with honeydew if they have ever dealt with an aphid outbreak. Honeydew attracts stinging insects like yellow jackets, and is extremely difficult to wash off. When infestation levels of SLF are high, honeydew drips from trees like a light rain, covering anything underneath with a sticky mess. It also promotes the growth of a fungus known as sooty mold that is not only unsightly but carries a strong odor.

For companies that do business outdoors, from pick-your-own orchards to event venues, a lanternfly infestation can make an otherwise peaceful day outside unpleasant for customers. Orchards may have to take extra steps to clean their fruit of honeydew and sooty mold and vineyards can lose their vines entirely. Honeybees often collect spotted lanternfly honeydew, and beekeepers may find that their honey takes on an unpleasant flavor. Homeowners may have to repeatedly wash their deck or car, deal with more stinging insects, and find that their yard is more stressful to spend time in.

How You Can Help Slow Spotted Lanternflies Down

We've just given you a lot of bad news about spotted lanternflies, but there are ways you can help! These three steps can prevent or slow their spread:

- Identify any host plants like grape, tree-of-heaven, maple, or walnut on your property.
- Check them for signs of spotted lanternfly a few times over the course of the year (eggs in the winter, nymphs in spring-midsummer, and adult from midsummer to first hard frost).
- If you see spotted lanternflies, take a picture and report them (https://massnrc.org/pests/slf). The earlier we know about an infestation, the more likely we are to be able to contain it. ◆

Three Resident Warblers of Cold Spring Park

Our wood warblers evolved in Northern Central America and moved north in between ice ages. Several moved south and became residents of South America. We see many others in their spring and fall migrations. This whole family of singing birds that have nine primary feathers is called *Parulidae*. They are related to our blackbirds and orioles and also to our buntings and longspurs.

There are three species that spend the summer in Cold Spring Park: the Yellow Warbler, the American Redstart, and the Pine Warbler. Our Pine Warblers arrive around April 1st and can still be heard singing here in October. They nest in the white pines along the Cochituate Aqueduct. The Yellow Warblers arrive in early May and set up territories abutting the wetlands along Beaconwood Road. The American Redstarts arrive later in May and are found in the deciduous trees throughout the park.

The First to Arrive: Pine Warblers

Male Pine Warbler.

This is the male Pine Warbler. They arrive around April 1 in Newton. They are larger warblers and have dim streaks under their wings. They have yellow breasts and white under their tails. The song is a steady, liquid trill, usually sung high in a white pine tree.

The Last to Leave: Pine Warblers

Female Pine Warbler

This is a female Pine Warbler. She has the same eye-catching white wing bars as the male, and a duller yellow wash below. She gives a loud, sharp chip as a warning note. These warblers winter in the southern U. S. U.S Pine Warblers are in Newton until November.

Male Yellow Warbler

Along Beaconwood Road

This is the male Yellow Warbler. The red streaks on his bright yellow breast give a beautiful color combination. He sings a song that is a high "sweet, sweet, sweet" followed by a lower "so, so, so-sweet." This is an onomatopoetic attempt to verbalize the bird's song. These birds are usually at low to mid height around the Beaconwood wetlands.

The Female Yellow Warbler

Female Yellow Warbler

Both she and her mate have no wing bars and are all yellow. She has a black eye staring out of her yellow face. As you can see, her back is olive-green. These warblers are among the earliest to leave us for the southern U. S. and Central America, departing at the end of July. Both these and the next species winter in Central America and the northern half of South America.

The Flashiest Looker

Male American Redstart

This is a male American Redstart. They are often very active in their search for insects. Once you see them in binoculars, you are reminded of the larger, more orange, Baltimore Orioles that nest in the park. Their song is a little warble that either drops or rises at the end. It has some sibilant quality to it.

The "Yellowstart"

Female or first-year male American Redstart

This is either a female American Redstart, or a first-year male that has yet to molt into the redder plumage. In the summer they will be under pressure to find lots of caterpillars and other insects to feed their growing chicks, so, they will remain active in the trees throughout the day.

Most warblers are in the midst of a physically demanding journey when we see them in Cold Spring Park. They are depleted from long flights and desperately need to replenish their bodies. They rely on insects, with caterpillars being the most nutrition per mouthful. Thus, they can often be seen obsessively searching for food during much of the day.

The time of year that our trees produce leaves, hence the emergence of insects and caterpillars that eat those leaves, is changing as we warm the earth up. This is becoming a bigger problem for migrants, and for the warbler parents who need the insects and caterpillars to feed their growing chicks. If the caterpillars are out two weeks before the migrating warblers get here from the south, the food supply for the young warblers may not exist by the time the young have hatched.

Planting native shrubs in your yard to support native insects like caterpillars can help with this sort of problem. Indiscriminate spraying adds to the problem.

In addition to the latter food problem, there is the ongoing danger involved in the migration that these small birds encounter annually. In his well-researched book, *A World on the Wing*, Scott Weidensaul states that, on average, 50% of songbirds die during each year of migrating. The probability of both male and female partners returning to the nest site after going south and coming back is about 25%. ◆

Pete Gilmore

Support the Newton Conservators through your IRA

Individuals 70½ and older can make a tax-free gift to the Newton Conservators directly from their IRA. Please consider a gift to the Conservators from your 2022 IRA distributions. The benefits to you include the reduction in income subject to tax, even if you don't itemize, and the amount donated counts toward the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD).

The benefits to the Conservators are immense and allow for us to continue to help preserve open space in Newton. Ask your IRA holder for a simple transfer letter or form. The Newton Conservators is a recognized 501(c)(3) organization.

— Thank you.

Newton Conservators, P.O. Box 590011, Newton, MA 02459

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 61 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. Digitized photographs, maps, and diagrams are also welcome.

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Thanks to the following contributors to this edition of the Newsletter: Richard Primack, Elizabeth Barnes, Pete Gilmore, Beth Wilkinson, Sam Corbin, Ted Kuklinski, and Katherine Howard.

Enjoy Nature... with webinars from Newton Conservators

Join us for our fall/winter webinar series online from September through January.

Each program will begin at 7 pm and last approximately one hour. You may register for the programs using the links below or by going to the event listing at newtonconservators.org. You will receive an email confirmation after you have registered.

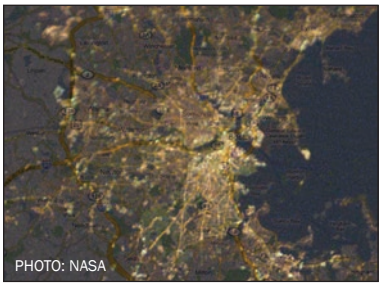
South Meadow Brook

Wednesday, September 14 … Newton's (Buried) Streams: Now You See Them... Now You Don't

Newton was once dotted with wetlands and criss-crossed by streams flowing to the Charles River. But one doesn't see many streams, marshes, or wooded wetlands nowadays. Where did they go? Where does our rainfall go now? Jennifer Steel will share her recent exploration of Newton's "buried" streams.

Jennifer Steel is the Chief Environmental Planner for the City of Newton. Part of her professional responsibility is implementing the State Wetlands Protection Act and Regulations and protecting the few, precious, "natural" streams and wetlands that remain in Newton.

Sign up: https://bit.ly/3QuuBE8



The City of Boston at Night

Wednesday, November 2 … Darkness in Distress

Light pollution, simply put, is any unnecessary or excessive outdoor illumination. Sadly, it's become a pervasive and ugly consequence of modern 24/7 society. Light pollution robs us of the night sky's beauty, negatively affects the ecosystem, and creates an in-your-face waste of energy. But a new mindset and new technology are poised to slow — and perhaps reverse — this bane of modern life. Come learn how you can safely light up your home, business, and community without wasting energy, disturbing your neighbors, or creating an unhealthy environment for humans and wildlife.

Kelly Beatty has been explaining the science and wonder of astronomy to the public since 1974, when he joined the staff of Cambridge-based *Sky & Telescope* magazine. An award-winning writer and communicator, he holds a Bachelors degree from the California Institute of Technology and a Master's degree in science journalism from Boston University. Kelly has been active in efforts to reduce light pollution for more than 30 years.

Sign up: https://bit.ly/3pfojvU

The Morse-Kelly School Pollinator Garden in Somerville

Wednesday, November 16 … What is a Native Plant Ordinance and How Can You Get One?

Renée Scott and David Falk, both founders of Green & Open Somerville in 2014, will walk you through why native plants are important and how they advocated for and helped author Somerville's Native Planting Ordinance. They will answer questions about the ordinance specifically and native plants in general.

Renée grew up in rural Vermont and has a degree in Environmental Planning and just completed a Master in Public Policy degree from Tufts University. David grew up in Brooklyn. He started with the Audubon Society in Vermont and now works at the Native Plant Trust as a horticulturist.

Sign up: https://bit.ly/3SOd8bb

Squirrel Tracks in Deep Snow

Thursday, January 12 … Reading the Stories Told by Animal Tracks and Signs

Many animals are secretive, avoiding people and finding food at night. Snow and mud provide a canvas for these animals' tracks and enable us to see who has been out and, often, what they were doing. Join Newton Conservators' Barbara Bates to learn what tracks and animal signs you can find in Newton's open spaces as well as in your own back yard.

Barbara is a teacher, naturalist and Newton Conservators' board member.

Sign up: https://bit.ly/3pneHPC

WALKS SCHEDULE FALL 2022

www.newtonconservators.org

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

Sunday, Sept. 11 from 1-4:00 pm

The Bogs, Marshes, and Vernal Pools of Cutler Park in Needham


PHOTO: NEWTON CONSERVATORS

Did you know that one of the largest freshwater marshes in greater Boston is found at Cutler Park? The glacial deposits in the park have also created vernal pools and a very interesting kettle hole bog. Join Newton Conservators' Advisor and Mass Wildlife Deputy Director Jon Regosin on a walk to explore the wetlands of Cutler Park. We will meet in the parking lot at Kendrick Pond and walk the trail out to Powell's Island across a boardwalk through the marsh. Please be prepared for an approximately 3.5-mile round-trip hike. We should be able to keep our feet dry, but we will go briefly off trail to better view the bog.

Trip Leader: Jon Regosin (Jonathan.regosin@gmail.com)

Saturday, Sept. 24 from 10-11:30 am

Kids: Nature Adaptation Games


PHOTO: KEN MALLORY

Join Barbara Bates and Sam Corbin, Newton Conservators' board members, in navigating Webster Woods while learning about how its inhabitants survive in this environment! Open to children five to nine years old accompanied by an adult. Registration for this event is required. Meeting location and directions will be emailed to all registrants before the walk. Please contact the walk leader for permission before bringing children beyond this age group.

Trip Leader: Barbara Bates (B.L.Bates@rcn.com)

Saturday, Oct. 1 from 10-12:00 pm

Notable Features of Webster Woods: Rock Walls, Cake Rock, The Beautiful Vale, Bare Pond, Black Gum Stands, Gooch's Cave, Etc…


PHOTO: KEN MALLORY

Webster Woods has numerous special geological, botanical, historical and landscape features. Learn about them from Richard Primack, life-long Newton resident and Prof. of Plant Ecology at BU. Meet at the end of Elgin Street on the edge of the woods. Rain date October 2nd.

Trip Leader: Richard Primack (primack@bu.edu)

Saturday, Oct. 8 from 10-11:30 am

Kids: Riverside Adventure


PHOTO: SAMANTHA CORBIN

Join Barbara Bates and Sam Corbin as they explore the Charles Riverside Park and learn about migration by playing games focusing on environmental interactions, food selection, and more! Open to children five to nine years old accompanied by an adult. Registration for this event is required. Meeting location and directions will be emailed to all registrants before the walk. Please contact the walk leader for permission before bringing children beyond this age group.

Trip Leader: Barbara Bates (B.L.Bates@rcn.com)

Saturday, Oct. 22 from 8-11:00 am

Birding at Cold Spring Park


PHOTO: HAYNES MILLER

Join Pete Gilmore and the Brookline Bird Club for an easy walk on flat woodland and meadow trails, looking for fall migrants including confusing fall warblers. In case there is a large turnout, we may split into smaller groups. Be advised, if it rains the walk can be muddy.

Trip Leader: Pete Gilmore (petegilmore79@gmail.com)

Saturday, Nov. 5 from 10-11:30 am

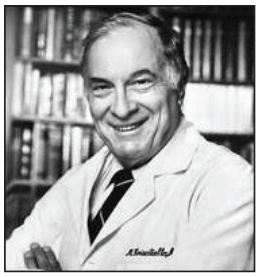
Kids: Discovering Seasonal Changes


PHOTO: KEN MALLORY

Join Barbara Bates and Sam Corbin, Newton Conservators' board members, as they explore how Webster Woods is preparing for winter! Open to children five to nine years old accompanied by an adult. Registration for this event is required. Meeting location and directions will be emailed to all registrants before the walk. Please contact the walk leader for permission before bringing children beyond this age group.

Trip Leader: Barbara Bates (B.L.Bates@rcn.com)

Remembering "Cris" Criscitiello



It is with sadness we report the passing on June 24, 2022, of Modestino "Cris" Criscitiello at age 96. Cris is fondly remembered for his service to our organization. He was on our Board of Directors, Board of Advisors, and Land Management Committee.

Cris was a well-respected cardiologist, He was a native of Pittsfield, MA, a graduate of Princeton University and Harvard Medical School, and served in the Navy in Korea. He spent 30 years of his career at NE Medical Center and Tufts Medical School, where he practiced and taught. In 2001, he received the prestigious Paul Dudley White Award from the American Heart Association.

In his retirement years, Cris became a sparkplug for the Newton Conservators. In 2010, he was honored with our Environmentalist of the Year Award along with other members of the Almanac Committee for their hard work creating and publishing the beautiful *Newton Conservators' Almanac*, which lists by month what plants and living creatures you might expect throughout the year. During that time, Cris was one of the prime movers for the maintenance and preservation of our Dexter Woods parcel near Newton North High School. He was also part of the Kesseler Woods Committee that successfully urged the City to use Community Preservation Act funds to purchase that large, wooded parcel in South Newton.

Cris will be especially remembered for his work hosting the Environmental Show on NewTV, a powerful force in advocating for the acquisition of Angino Farm and Kesseler Woods. The show also helped highlight existing open spaces such as Cold Spring Park, Newton's Aqueducts, the Charles River, and many more. Cris loved going into the field for the show; a favorite memory for me was filming Cris doing a closing segment about the Charles River while he paddled a canoe under the Blue Heron Bridge. These shows are still available on our Newton Conservators' YouTube channel.

Cris was an experienced birder and wrote newsletter articles on birds including owls, nighthawks, and even the thought-to-be-extinct ivory-billed woodpecker. The birding community is grateful for the many years Cris and his wife, Nancy, hosted the Newton section of the annual Greater Boston Christmas Bird Count. Cris appropriately received the Charles Johnson Maynard Award (named after a famous early Newton birder) for his actions to promote awareness of biodiversity, reclamation of wildlife habitat, and protection of our natural resources.

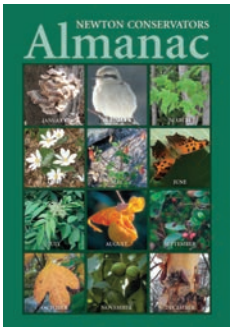
Cris has been described as a retired cardiologist with an awful lot of heart. He certainly led a full life with so many accomplishments, and he will be sorely missed as a true Newton Conservator and a friend. Cris' obituary and memorial page can be found at https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/bostonglobe/name/modestino-criscitiello-obituary?id=35644230

— Ted Kuklinski

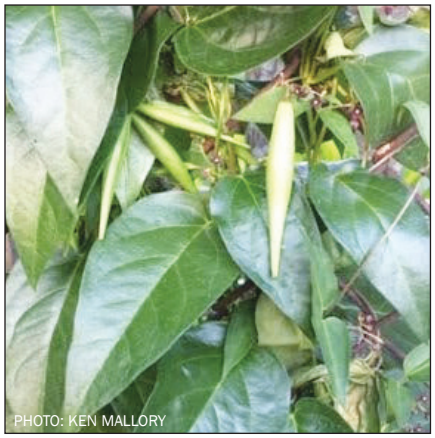
Fall's here. Enjoy the Outdoors!

Shop online at 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.**



▶ Black Swallow-wort Alert ◀



Black Swallow-wort

Please be on the lookout for the black swallow-wort (BSW) vine. It's a non-native invader now infesting Newton. You'll find it in many of your yards and hiding in hedges and shrubs. It reduces biodiversity and degrades our local environment, and, sadly, is fatal to monarch butterflies. Starting in late summer, the large seed pods will open, and the wind will disperse the seeds on white fluffy fibers to make the infestation even worse.

The BSW vine has blue-green glossy, opposite leaves, small purple flowers, and large seed pods that hang down like pea pods. (See our website for many other photos.)

You can dig it up, cut it down, or just pull off the seed pods to prevent further spread. Put everything into a bag and into your trash, not into yard waste, to avoid further spread.

For more photos and information about this and other common invasive species in Newton, see the invasive plant information on our website (listed under Resources), such as this link for BSW: https://newtonconservators.org/black-swallow-wort/

Newton Conservators conducts many work sessions in spring and fall to protect Newton's open spaces and manage invasive species. We are now getting fall sessions underway. If you would like to be on the email list for notices of our group activities, please email Invasives@newtonconservators.org. Thank you!

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

amazonsmile

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. 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*.

NEWTON CONSERVATORS

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:

- ☐ $250 Directors' Circle
- ☐ $125 Patron
- ☐ $100 Donor
- ☐ $75 Sustaining Member
- ☐ $50 Family Membership
- ☐ $35 Individual Membership
- ☐ $15 Student Membership
- ☐ 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 $_____

Memberships run for the calendar year. 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/ to renew or join online. *Consider including Newton Conservators in your estate planning. Contact us at president@NewtonConservators.org.*

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NEWTON CONSERVATORS

FALL ISSUE

NEWSLETTER

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

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IN THE FALL ISSUE:

Female Oriole Building Nest
photo by Suzette Barbier

Go Green! ...and all the other colors of the rainbow. You can view this newsletter at newtonconservators.org/newsletters. To elect not to receive a paper copy of the newsletter, email us at membership@newtonconservators.org.