



Newton Conservators E-Bulletin *Wednesday, March 8, 2023*

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



Spring is Coming Soon!

Only a few short weeks until Spring! And Newton Conservators has a jam-packed schedule of over 50 activities coming up through July including [webinars](#), [walks](#), [invasive pulls](#), Newton Serves, festivals and village days, and even our first live outdoor [Annual Dinner Meeting](#) on Wednesday, May 24th.



The printed Spring 2023 issue of the Newton Conservators Newsletter has been mailed and is also available on our [website](#).

With the importance of pollinators in the news lately, you might want to check out tonight's Newton Free Library webinar (cosponsored by Green Newton and Newton Conservators) on [Native Bees and Honey Bees](#) by Lindsay Barranco (University of Maryland). We have also recently posted on our YouTube channel our previous webinars by bee expert [Dr. Robert Gegear](#) and one on the how-to's of planting a pollinator garden by master gardener [Beth Wilkinson](#). Also take a look back at a video recap of our very successful [WinterFEST Walk](#) at Cold Spring Park.

Check out the current list of events below through May 2023 or on our website [Events](#) listing. Hope to see you out and about in Newton this Spring!

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, March 8, 2023, 7-8 pm

The Importance of Bees - Native Bees and Honey Bees

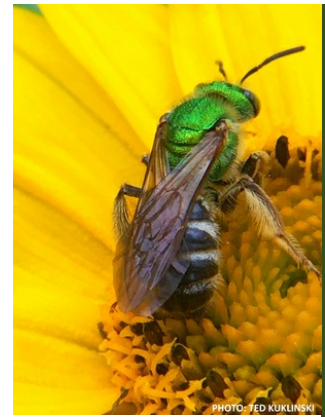
Lindsay Barranco (vanEnglesdorp Bee Lab, University of Maryland)

Newton Free Library - Zoom Webinar - Register [HERE](#)



Join Lindsay Barranco from the vanEnglesdorp Bee Lab at the University of Maryland for a talk on the importance of bees - native bees and honeybees. This program is cosponsored by Newton Free Library, Green Newton and Newton Conservators. The program will cover:

- A description of native bees (both ground nesting and tube nesting)
- What individuals can do to enhance their environments through floral plantings and optimizing sites for native bee nesting.
- Challenges native bees and honeybees face
- The history and biology of honeybee colonies and how they are utilized in commercial agriculture for pollination in the U.S.



Lindsay Barranco is a graduate student at the University of Maryland who has wide ranging experience with both honeybees and native bees - for a time she was a beekeeper and apiary inspector for the State of Maryland and currently focuses more on native bee issues and is doing a thesis dealing with ground nesting bee substrates, researching different surface types for the benefit of ground nesting native bees.

Register for this FREE webinar at <https://newtonfreelibrary.libcal.com/event/9854297> Registration for this program will end two hours before the start time. The login information will be sent just after registration closes. Please be sure to check your spam folder in case it lands there.

Sunday. March 12, 2023, 1:00 pm
Upper Falls Loop Walking Tour
with Jerry Reilly
Little Luke's Cafe (1225 Chestnut Street)
Fig City News Story [HERE](#)



Jerry Reilly, the magician of Upper Falls, notes that signs for the Upper Falls Loop have recently appeared in his neighborhood. The signs point the way for a new, pleasant, 2.5-mile walk through six park lands – Hemlock Gorge, Braceland Park, Charles River Walk, Upper Falls Greenway, Frank Barney Conservation Area, and the Martin Poetry Path. On Sunday, March 12, Jerry will lead a tour of the route, starting 1PM outside the new Little Luke's Cafe (1225 Chestnut Street) at the corner of Chestnut and Oak Streets.



Tuesday, March 14, 2023
Override Vote on Tuesday, March 14, 2023

As you probably are aware, Mayor Fuller has proposed an override which will be voted upon on Tuesday, March 14. Portions of the override funds will be used towards fields, parks, courts, playgrounds, and trees. Question 1 of the [override proposal](#) asks the question:



"Shall the City of Newton be allowed to assess an additional \$9,175,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of funding Public Schools for student needs, street and sidewalk paving and safety improvements, tree planting and maintenance, park and recreational facility improvements and maintenance, improvements to Horace Mann Elementary School, sustainability and climate resiliency actions, and Senior Services programming and operations for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023?"

Here are a few links to help you understand the override better:

- [CITY OF NEWTON OVERRIDE 2023](#) (best source of information from the City)
- [Parks, Fields, Courts and Playgrounds](#) (city information on this aspect)
- [Trees](#) (city information on this aspect)
- [Primer on overrides and debt exclusions](#) - Fig City News
- [Override basics: history, meaning, cost](#) - Newton Beacon

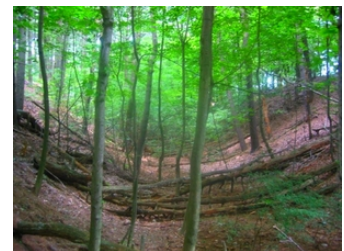
Sunday, April 2, 2023, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Aqueduct Hike

Leader: Henry Finch

Waban Starbucks, 474 Woodward Street, Newton, MA, 02468

Join a five-mile hike through woods, meadows, and fields along the Newton sections of the Sudbury and Cochituate aqueducts. This is a steady but not fast hike. Participants should be in sufficiently good shape to keep up with the group (there are cutoffs for those who wish to shorten the hike). Meet in front of the Waban Starbucks coffee shop near the Waban MBTA station. Trip Leader: Henry Finch.



Saturday, April 8, 2023, 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Kids- Noticing Cold Spring Park

Leader: Barbara Bates

Cold Spring Park, Duncklee Road, Newton, MA

Sign up: [HERE](#)



Join Barbara Bates and Sam Corbin, Newton Conservators Board members, to explore how early spring affects Cold Spring Park, we will let what catches participants' eyes guide our walk! Early flowers and plants will be making themselves visible this time of year. Together, we will explore the trails along the swamp, woods, and meadow in Cold Spring Park. Open to children 5 through 9 years old accompanied by an adult. Registration limited to 10 children. A wait list will be available if registration is filled. Meeting location and directions will be mailed to all registrants before the walk. Trip Leader: Barbra Bates (B.L.Bates@rcn.com)



Wednesday, April 19, 2023, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

The Stories the Rocks Tell:

An Introduction to the Geological History of Newton and Eastern Massachusetts

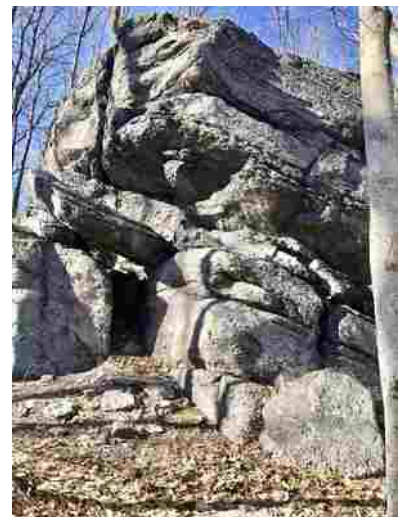
Chris Hepburn

Sign up: <https://bit.ly/3Zc7qC9>



Newton's rocks are like ancient scrolls for those who can interpret them, telling fascinating stories of continental collisions, high mountains forming, explosive volcanic eruptions, and evidence of ancient glaciers. Chris Hepburn will tell us a bit about how to read the geological record of the rocks in and around Newton and their exciting history, including their journey, via plate tectonic movements, from where they originated near the South Pole almost 600 million years ago.

Chris has a Ph.D. in Geology from Harvard and is Professor Emeritus at Boston College. He has spent over 50 years studying the rocks of New England and the northern Appalachians and has authored and co-authored dozens of articles on them in scientific journals. He has led numerous geological field excursions for professionals, students, and the Conservators to the outcrops in Newton. Chris is currently co-president of the Conservators.



Saturday, April 22, 2023, 9:00 - Noon

Earth Day Celebration at Hammond Pond

Cosponsored with the STREET at Chestnut Hill



Watch for details on this event to be held near Hammond Pond!

Sunday, April 23, 2023, Noon - 4:00 pm

Newton's Earth Day Festival

Organized by Green Newton

Newton City Hall - War Memorial Circle

Newton Conservators Table cosponsored with Newton Pollinator Group

Come visit our shared table with the Newton Pollinator Group at Green Newton's Earth Day Celebration. Bring your friends and family to Newton's 2nd Annual Earth Day Festival for live music, green technology showcase, an EV expo, nature themed activities, food, and more.

There is a terrific line-up of exhibitors ready to answer all your questions on waste reduction & composting, electric vehicles, solar power, insulation, heat pumps, gardening & pollination. Are you considering an Electric Vehicle? Check out the EV Display at the festival, where many of our Newton neighbors will be available to tell you more about their experience. This is the perfect time to ask an EV owner about charging stations, EV ranges, pricing and other questions. There will even be test drives available for select cars! More interested in bikes? We'll have E-bikes on display so you can see first-hand how they can help get you around town! The Earth Day Festival is jam packed with fun activities for kiddos of all ages. Enjoy live music from local bands. Get ready to hear some great tunes to inspire us all on Earth Day!



Sunday, April 23, 2023, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Signs of Spring in the Webster Woods:

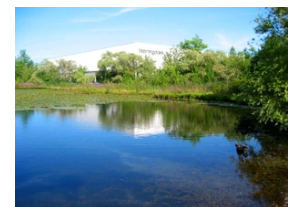
Wildflowers, Trees Leafing Out, Migratory Birds, and Sunfish

Hammond Pond Reservation, Newton, MA

Leader: Richard Primack

Come and observe the first signs of spring in the Webster Woods with Richard Primack, life-long Newton resident and Prof. of Plant Ecology at BU. The walk will also include the Hammond Canal, the Hemlock Grove and a "hanging rock". Meet at the kiosk on the edge of the parking lot at Hammond Pond where the trail enters the woods.

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



Thursday, April 27, 2023, 7:00pm - 8:00pm

Are Pollinators Being Supported in Newton?

Professor Richard Primack

Sponsored by Newton Free Library & Green Newton

Register [HERE](#)

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1dfFEmOXTbG3S8IHXMmtQ



Join Professor Richard Primack for this program that follows up on the March 8th presentation on The Importance of Bees: Native Bees and Honey Bees. Professor Primack will present the results of a recent field survey of Newton's pollinator community carried out by a team of Boston University undergrads under his direction. The lecture will be illustrated with photos and videos of Newton's pollinators in action. This program is part of the Green Newton Series presented in partnership with Green Newton. The Newton survey was designed to determine:



- What major plants were being used by European honey bees and native pollinators
- Whether honeybees were outcompeting native pollinators
- If pollinator gardens are benefitting native pollinators
- If honeybees tended to visit cultivated plants and native pollinators tended to visit wild plants

Richard Primack is a Professor of Plant Ecology at Boston University and a lifelong Newton resident. His current research involves studying the effects of climate change on the flowering times of wildflowers and the leaf out times of trees. He is the author of university textbooks in Conservation Biology and the popular book *Walden Warming: Climate Change Comes to Thoreau's Woods*.

Registration will remain open even after the program begins. The login link will be sent from Green Newton. Please be sure to check your spam folder in case it lands there.

Saturday, April 29, 2023, 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Kids- Discovering Hammond Pond

Leader: Barbara Bates



Did you know there is a large pond next to Webster Woods? Join Barbara Bates and Sam Corbin, Newton Conservators Board members to explore a location new to our children's program! We will be investigating this area together as we work on our scientific questioning, observation skills, and learning about our surroundings. Open to children 5 through 9 years old accompanied by an adult. Registration limited to 10 children. A wait list will be available if registration is filled. Meeting location and directions will be mailed to all registrants before the walk.



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

Sunday, May 7, 2023, 9:00 - 11:30 am

Cold Spring Park Invasive Pull - Newton SERVES

Cosponsored by Friends of Cold Spring Park

Organizer: Alan Nogee

Register after March 15 [HERE](#):



Cold Spring Park is being invaded by garlic mustard, knotweed, buckthorn, and other species. We will keep the Cochituate Aqueduct walk under control after previous years' pulls, and work on the meadow and Beacon Street parking lot areas. Wear long pants and garden gloves. The invasive plant material will be properly disposed of as trash, not as yard waste. Leaders are Alan Noguee, 617-564-1664 and Katherine Howard, 617-721-2571. A NewtonSERVES project - (registration opens March 15 at the NewtonSERVES website.)



Sunday, May 7, 2023, 9:00 am - 11:30 am

[NewtonSERVES - Dolan Pond Invasives Pull](#)

Dolan Pond Conservation Area, West Newton

Leader: Ted Kuklinski

Register after March 15 [HERE](#):



Come help us eradicate this soil-damaging invasive garlic mustard from this gem of a pocket park. We also continue to control the Japanese Knotweed; every year it gets easier. We will also do some nature study, so bring binoculars for observing birds and other creatures that make this vernal pool area home. Wear long pants and garden gloves. Meet at the HP Parking area near the Webster Park entrance. Leader is Ted Kuklinski, 617-763-3470. This is a NewtonSERVES project. Registration opens March 15 at the NewtonSERVES website. To register with NewtonSERVES click [HERE](#).



Sunday, May 7, 2023, 9:00 - 11:00 am

[NewtonServes Trail Work in Nahanton Park](#)

Nahanton Community Gardens

Register after March 15 [HERE](#).



On NewtonServes day, join us for some trail work in Nahanton Park. We'll remove vegetation that blocks a couple of trail segments each summer. We'll also clean out debris along a short segment of another trail. Wear sturdy shoes and work gloves. If you have one, bring a tool for clipping shrubs. Enter the park from Winchester Street and go down the driveway to the first parking lot on the left. Meet at the kiosk on the opposite side of the driveway.



NewtonSERVES is a day of community service that brings together hundreds of volunteers of all ages to clean up and improve our parks, school grounds, and conservation lands. Registration opens March 15 at the NewtonSERVES website. To register with NewtonSERVES click [HERE](#).

Sunday, May 7, 2023, 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
NewtonSERVES Houghton Garden Invasives Pull
Houghton Garden
Leader: Sally Baker & Katherine Howard
Register after March 15 [HERE](#).



Help tackle the garlic mustard and black swallow-wort near the entrance of Houghton Garden where it borders the T Track crossing to Webster Woods. Help keep these invaders out of beautiful Houghton Garden! Wear long pants tucked into socks, closed shoes, and garden gloves. Trash bags will be provided; the City will dispose properly as trash, not as yard waste. Leaders are Sally Baker and Katherine Howard, 617-721-2571. Registration opens March 15 at the NewtonSERVES website. To register with NewtonSERVES click [HERE](#).



Wednesday, May 10, 2023, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm
[Rewilding our Communities for Climate Resilience](#)
Hannah Lewis
<https://newtonconservators.org/events/rewilding-our-communities-for-climate-resilience/>
Sign up: <https://bit.ly/3KyvfAk>



What holds some 500 species, sequesters 500 pounds of CO₂/year, is 10°F cooler than its surroundings, soaks up lots of rainwater, and is created by children and their elders in spaces no bigger than a tennis court? A “mini-forest” planted using the Miyawaki Method, of course! After a couple of years of as-needed weeding and watering, these nascent forests form a canopy and — like any other healthy ecosystem — become self-sufficient. We’ll discuss what a mini-forest is, what it can do for your neighborhood, how to plant one, and why people all over the world are organizing their communities to plant mini-forests in the small spaces around where they live and work.



Hannah Lewis is the author of *Mini-Forest Revolution: Using the Miyawaki Method to Rapidly Rewild the World*, published in June 2022 by Chelsea Green; a French translation of the book was released in January 2023 by Editions Eyrolles in France. Hannah has an MS in Sustainable Agriculture and Sociology from Iowa State University and a BA in Environmental Studies from Middlebury College. She lives in Minneapolis, where she works for the non-profit Renewing the Countryside to build sustainable local and regional food systems and plant mini-forests.

Saturday, May 13, 2023, 7:30 am - 9:30 am
Spring Birding at Dolan Pond
Leaders: Ian Buzby, Mike Hanley, and Ted Kuklinski



Dolan Pond, 76 Webster Park - West Newton

<https://newtonconservators.org/events/spring-birding-at-cold-spring-park/>

Explore Dolan Pond Conservation Area in West Newton at peak time for newly arrived colorful residents, as well as migrating warblers, thrushes, vireos and more. This area is home to a number of vernal pools which provide habitat for ducks, herons, turtles, frogs, and toads. Colorful wood ducks have nested and had babies here in recent years.

Over 60 species are usually seen each spring and it is considered an eBird hotspot – you can find the latest eBird results for Dolan Pond Conservation Area at <https://ebird.org/hotspot/L2829294>



This will be an easy walk over accessible paths and boardwalk in this 9 acre conservation area. Bring binoculars if you have them. Children and beginners are welcome. If the group is large, we will split into multiple sections. Meet near 76 Webster Park and park around the circle (HP parking available).

In pouring rain, the trip may be canceled. Trip Leaders, who all frequently bird at Dolan Pond, are Ian Buzby, Mike Hanley, and Ted Kuklinski (tkuklinski@aol.com).

Saturday, May 13, 2023, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

[Newton Family Funfest - SHINE](#)

Newton City Hall - War Memorial Circle

Look for the Newton Conservators table and tent at the Newton Family FunFEST. We'll have some kids's activities. Newton Family FunFEST is a celebration of art and entertainment for all ages including live musical performances, Tanglewood Marionettes, carnival, arts & crafts workshops, live public art event, vendor booths and more.

Newton's Cultural Development staff is seeking local student artists to participate in "SHINE," a public art project. The art installation project, which will run from May to October, is expected to consist of a half-dozen murals that will be temporarily displayed in some of Newton's parks and

playgrounds, Newton's Cultural Development office said in a statement. The project will include a live painting event during this year's annual Family FunFEST on May 13. All Newton students in grades 6 to 12 may apply to participate in the art installation until March 28 at 5 p.m.



Saturday, May 14, 2023, 8:00 am - 10:30 am

[Mother's Day Bird Walk at Nahanton Park](#)

Leaders: Alison Leary & Haynes Miller

Nahanton Park - Nahanton Street entrance

471 Nahanton Street, Newton, MA

Cosponsored by Friends of Nahanton Park



Nahanton Park offers a mix of woodlands, wetlands, edge habitat, and meadows along the Charles River, making it one of the best birding spots in Newton for migrants as well as resident species. See what birds are being seen at Nahanton Park on its eBird hotspot listing (<https://ebird.org/hotspot/L458870>). Meet at the Nahanton Street entrance next to the river. Parking is available inside the park. Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome. Waterproof shoes are recommended. Walk will be canceled in steady rain. Trip Leaders: Alison Leary (617-821-5619) and Haynes Miller (617-413-2419)



Saturday, May 20, 2023, 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Kids- Exploring Dolan Pond

Leader: Barbara Bates

Dolan Pond, 76 Webster Park, Newton, MA, 02465

<https://newtonconservators.org/events/kids-exploring-dolan-pond/>

Sign up: see website



Join Barbara Bates, Newton Conservators Board member and teacher naturalist at Mass Audubon to explore the animals and plants in the Dolan Pond conservation area and play nature-themed games. Open to children 5 through 9 years old accompanied by an adult. Registration limited to 8 children. A wait list will be available if registration is filled. Meeting location and directions will be mailed to all registrants before the walk. Trip Leader: Barbara Bates (B.L.Bates@rcn.com)



PHOTO: MARGARET MALLORY

A Stroll Through Cold Spring Park

Saturday, May 20, 2023, 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

Leaders: Alan Noguee & Pete Gilmore

Cosponsored by Friends of Cold Spring Park

Cold Spring Park, Duncklee Road, Newton, MA



Tour Cold Spring Park, a natural gem in the heart of Newton, and explore some of its natural and unnatural wonders, mysteries, threats, and possibilities with Friends of Cold Spring Park founder and President Alan Noguee. See how its seven different habitats create a wildlife haven, why its ability to continue supporting wildlife is at risk, and what we can do about it. Trip Leaders: Alan Noguee (friendsofcoldspringpark@gmail.com) and Pete Gilmore (petegilmore79@gmail.com).



Sunday, May 21, 2023, 8:00 am - 10:00 am

Birding at Cold Spring Park

Leader: Pete Gilmore

Cold Spring Park, Duncklee Road, Newton, MA

<https://newtonconservators.org/events/birding-at-cold-spring-park-4/>



Participants will meet near the turnaround at the end of the left side of the Beacon Street parking area. This is an easy walk on fat woodland trails. We will look for resident birds as well as spring migrants. The latter may include warblers, thrushes and vireos. We saw a Philadelphia Vireo on this walk two years ago. Beginners and children are welcome. Trip Leader: Pete Gilmore (petegilmore79@gmail.com)



Wednesday, May 24, 2023, 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Newton Conservators Annual Dinner Meeting

Speaker: Norm Smith, Raptor Specialist

Mount Ida Campus of UMass Boston



We will hold our Annual Meeting at the Mount Ida Campus of UMass Amherst. We will meet under a tent for a buffet dinner, a short business meeting with elections and awards, and a keynote speaker. Access starts at 5 PM. Watch for further details!



Our speaker this year is Norman Smith, Raptor Specialist from Mass Audubon. Mr. Smith will present his work (which started in 1981) observing, capturing, banding, and relocating Snowy Owls at Logan International Airport and how this project developed in an unusual way to include research on Saw-whet Owls. His slides, sense of humor, and depth of knowledge are remarkable.

Conservators Webinar Videos Recently Posted

Planting for Pollinators

Beth Wilkinson - Master Gardener

YouTube Video: https://youtu.be/i0_ekLa2q9s



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. In this webinar, learn what you can plant to encourage pollinators to visit. You will learn 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.

This presentation was originally given on Wednesday, May 19, 2021 as part of the Newton Conservators Spring 2021 Webinar Series.

More Than Just the Buzz:

Using ecological data to restore native pollination systems (and why it matters)

YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/Xs60YDw-8FQ>



Join Dr. Robert J. Gegear to learn what you can do to maximize biodiversity in your own backyard by creating pollination systems that are at risk of local extinction. He also discusses his Beecology Citizen Science Project, highlighting recent examples of how communities from across Massachusetts have used his native plant list to successfully restore pollination systems in areas with high levels of human disturbance, including parks, golf courses, old fields with invasives/non-natives, agricultural areas, conservation lands, and school campuses.



Dr. Robert J. Gegear is a Professor in the Department of Biology at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. He has been studying the neuroecology and conservation of plant-pollinator systems for over 25 years. Dr. Gegear is the founder of the Beecology Project, a citizen science project uses eco-technology to protect and restore plant-pollinator systems native to New England.

This presentation was originally given on Wednesday, October 13, 2021 as part of the Newton Conservators Fall 2021 Webinar Series, and was also cosponsored by Friends of Cold Spring Park, Green Newton, and Mothers Out Front - Newton.

Reading the Stories Told by Animal Tracks and Signs

Presenter: Barbara Bates

Newton Conservators Webinar Series

YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/OQ5-ZNQ1iv4>



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. She 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 and presented programs at several Continuing Care Retirement Communities and Senior Centers. She 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.

This presentation was originally given on January 12, 2023 as part of the Newton Conservators 2022-2023 Fall-Winter Webinar Series hosted by Newton Conservators board member Beth Wilkinson.

Watching this video would be a great way to prepare for the WinterFEST walk on Sunday!



Newton Conservators Social Media



Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#). Our expansive and informative website is www.newtonconservators.org. You can easily access these Social Media accounts by simply clicking on the appropriate icons on our website's main menu strip.

Note that we have recently added a video icon (Play Button) which will take you to our YouTube Channel. We also have an organized table of contents page for our YouTube channel which can be found at <https://newtonconservators.org/videos/>



You can subscribe to this eBulletin by sending an email to ebulletin@newtonconservators.org or unsubscribe by clicking the unsubscribe line at the end of this email. Hoping to see you out and about soon in Newton's open spaces!

Newton Conservators Newsletter

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In Praise of Spring Ponds

Over 60 years ago I read *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau, and I can still recall his descriptions of ponds. He claimed a pond is: "... a landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is Earth's eye, looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature."

Every time I see reflections in Bare Pond in Webster Woods, I think of an eye reflecting the world back at me.

When the first thaws unlock winter's grip, I look for the first hints of spring in the wetlands and at pond edges: willow branches turning yellow green long before other trees



Bare Pond inlet reflections in March 2022

Before its green leaves emerge, look for the skunk cabbage's well-camouflaged spathe — a claw-like structure containing the flowers on a spadix that looks like a tiny pineapple. These spathes sometimes push up through snow in February because the plant's giant, leek-like

root generates enough heat to warm the air around it to over 60 degrees. That heat helps the funky smell of the flowers attract the carrion-loving insects that pollinate the plant. By May one can barely see the claw-like spathes because the huge green leaves of the plant overshadow everything.

By March the vernal witch-hazel at the northwest corner of Bulloughs Pond has a beautiful patch of brilliant orange flowers.



Skunk cabbage spathe in Cold Spring Park April 2021

and the emerging yellow-streaked, purplish spathes of skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*).



Vernal witch-hazel blooms in March

Our native witch-hazel blooms yellow in the fall. Witch-hazel flowers have an amazing ability to survive cold by curling their petals into a ball to reduce water loss.

Continued on page 2

The Spring 2023 Newton Conservators Newsletter has been published and is being sent to those who subscribe to the print edition. It is also available online [HERE](#) and contains the following interesting articles and features:

- [In Praise of Spring Ponds \(Barbara Bates\)](#)
- [Preserving At-risk Wildlife and Biodiversity Through Gardening \(Alan Noguee\)](#)
- [Spring Webinars](#)
- [Save the Date! Outdoor Annual Dinner Meeting/NewtonServes](#)
- [Spring Walks](#)
- [Remembering John Bliss \(Tamara Bliss, Bonnie Carter\)](#)

- [Invasives Update](#)

PLEASE JOIN OR RENEW YOUR NEWTON CONSERVATORS MEMBERSHIP



We would be most grateful if you renewed your membership or joined us officially for the first time to support our important open space work! The challenges of protecting, enhancing and expanding open space in Newton continue. We hope that you will continue to support the Conservators efforts in these regards by renewing your membership for 2023 or joining us if you are not.

Perhaps consider renewing at a higher level, adding a new donation, or purchasing a gift membership for someone else who is passionate about open space. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit, we also accept donations for a number of affiliated local open space groups. As part of the donation process, you can specify specific funds. This year we call your attention to our special "Trails Fund" in support of additional trails work in Newton. Thanks so much!

You can renew or join the Newton Conservators online at <https://newtonconservators.org/membership/>. Donations may be made at our securely via our website at <https://newtonconservators.org/ways-to-give/>.

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.

Newton Conservators is committed to fostering a sense of belonging for all people in Newton's open spaces by:

- *planning and evaluating all of our activities through a diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) lens*
- *continually educating ourselves and our constituents about DEIJ issues*
- *building authentic relationships with regional organizations serving historically marginalized people*
- *working to include previously underrepresented people on our Board and among our members, program participants, and open space visitors*
- *diversifying all with whom we partner and do business.*

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