



**NEWTON
CONSERVATORS**

SUMMER ISSUE

NEWSLETTER

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

NEWTONCONSERVATORS.ORG • SUMMER 2023

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Deer Park in Webster Woods

The former "Deer Park" in Webster Conservation Area is now open to

the public. A half-mile trail loops around the property. Access points are on Hammond Pond Parkway (just north of the MBTA

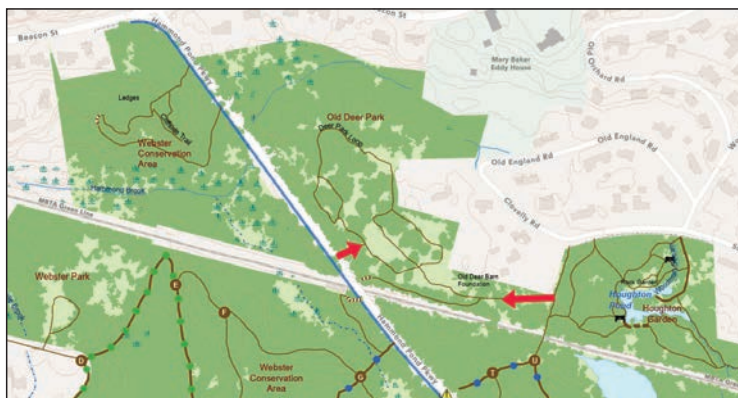
tracks) and from the dirt road on the western side of Houghton Garden Conservation Area.



Entrance from east side; the small unlocked gate at right leads into the Deer Park.

Parking is prohibited on the east side of the parkway. The nearest parking is on the opposite side of the parkway, 300 yards north near Beacon Street. Use caution crossing the parkway. Access to the Deer Park is easier from the east side, from the dirt road that extends south from Suffolk Road on the west side of Houghton Garden.

You can also reach this dirt road by taking an easy half-mile walk from the DCR



Hammond Pond Trail Parking. Walk on the Blue Trail next to the pond until it turns left just before the MBTA tracks. Continue straight across the

tracks, walk past the entrance to Houghton Garden, and turn left before the chain link fence.

If you enter from the east side, go straight through the gate in the old Deer Park fence. The trail that goes to the left, around the fence, is a rough route adjacent to the MBTA tracks. It leads to Hammond Pond Parkway and doesn't offer access to the Deer Park.



Ira Wallach memorial plaque

is named in memory of Ira Wallach, who was a member of the Conservation Commission for 28 years and its chair for 23 years.

The Deer Park trail is marked with white blazes. It forks in several places. The trail

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History

The Deer Park land was bought by Edwin and Jane Webster in the late 1800s. Jane, a noted conservationist, introduced deer to their estate. The Websters later donated much of their land to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for preservation as a conservation area. The donated land is now part of the DCR Hammond Pond Reservation. (A fanciful history of the area appears on the Conservators' website and in the 2020 winter newsletter as "A Letter from Edwin Webster." <https://newtonconservators.org/webster-letter/>)

In 1968, the City of Newton acquired a large parcel of land from the Webster estate by a "friendly" eminent domain taking. In a friendly taking, the property owner wishes to sell to the government, but needs to have the government use its eminent domain power to eliminate title problems or other legal issues.



1970 dedication plaque

the 1970 dedication of the reservation. This area was later combined with land acquired in 1974 and 2019 to form the current Webster Conservation Area.

This land, including the Deer Park, was named the Newton Webster Reservation in honor of the family. A plaque near the Hammond Pond Parkway entrance to the Deer Park commemorates

The Deer Park was eventually surrounded by a chain link



An example of fence damage in Deer Park

By 2014, the deer were gone, and the fence was in rough shape. With the deer no longer taking care of property maintenance, the area became overgrown with vines and brush. Prior to creating the trail loop and opening the parcel



Goat herd helps clear oriental bittersweet.

bittersweet, so the Conservation Commission contracted heavy mowers and bush cutters. Now, routine mowing is helping to reestablish and maintain the meadow. ♦

— Dan Brody



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 \$_____

☐ I would like to volunteer!

Memberships run for the calendar year. All new members receive *Walking Trails in Newton's Parks and Conservation Lands*.

NAME _____ EMAIL _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

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

☐ **Yes, I agree to receive emails from the Conservators!**

I'd like the quarterly newsletter...

☐ via US mail ☐ via email ☐ Both



Presidents' Message at the Annual Meeting



We welcome you to our first outdoor annual meeting in the history of the Newton Conservators. It is inspiring to celebrate with all of you, both members and new supporters. We relish the fresh air and open-space tent environment provided for us by the Mount Ida Campus of the University of Massachusetts Amherst. We thank Mayor Fuller and her staff for the opportunity to use this space protected from the rain. We acknowledge that this land was and is the homeland of the Massachusetts people and hope to live up to their example by sustaining healthy, resilient ecosystems into the future, with your support!

Preserving and maintaining open space is still our major priority in this, our 62nd year. As an all-volunteer organization, Newton Conservators relies on many individuals and on partnerships with other organizations to help protect the environment and allow all to enjoy nature's beauty. We work closely with the City of Newton by holding Conservation Restrictions (CRs) on many city-owned parcels of land. Our volunteer teams conduct yearly monitoring visits and report back to the relevant city department about current conditions and recommendations for maintenance or enforcement.



Left to right: Alice Ingerson, Jeff Rosenberg, Marcia Cooper, Peter Barrer, and Nicole Banks.

First Steps: What You Can Do

- Turn lights off when not needed
- Shield external lights
- Use dimmable bulbs
- Use "warm light" bulbs
- Use low-output bulbs
- Install timers and/or motion detectors



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF J. KELLY BEATTY

We have a "jam-packed" schedule of nearly a hundred activities this year, including webinars, walks, invasive pulls, village days, and other activities. We hope to connect all people in Newton to nature and our open spaces and to welcome visitors from elsewhere.

From the fall of 2022 through the spring of 2023, we offered eight free webinars on wide range of topics, including light pollution, native plant ordinances, Newton's street trees and buried streams, identifying animals by their winter tracks, invasive "jumping worms," and Newton's geological history. We first began offering webinars in the fall of 2020 because of the

Covid crisis, but we have continued them because of the strong attendance and interest. Most of these special presentations are available on our YouTube channel for those who could not attend the original presentations.

Many of our walks attract participants of all ages, with six recent walks targeted specifically for children. The walks and birding activities cover most areas of Newton, including Dolan Pond, Houghton Garden, the Charles River, Nahanton Park, Cold Spring Park, the Aqueducts, and Webster Woods. As the Covid crisis recedes, we can now come together more often and enjoy all types of indoor and outdoor activities.

Our published *Guide to Walking Trails in Newton's Parks and Conservation Areas* is widely used by people searching for new and interesting places to explore outdoors. We are in the planning stage of creating a new, updated version of this treasure, using maps aligned with Newton's computerized Geographic Information System.



Bird watching at Nahanton Park

Continued on page 4

Our website, newtonconservators.org, has many of these updates along with background information on local open spaces, current nature-related events, and historical information. Other sections on our website include a handy reference tool for identifying invasive plants and a Pollinator Toolkit that suggests native plants to help our gardens support butterflies and bees. Other sections provide information on activities and copies of our newsletter.



Livingston Cove before being redesigned.



*The Smart Cart
contributed by a Newton
Conservator grant*

Our quarterly newsletter continues to provide quality informative articles by experts on environmental topics. Recent articles have covered gardening for biodiversity, the invasive spotted lanternfly, the changing forest of Webster Woods, spring ponds, diversity and social justice issues in land conservation, and important redesign and rehabilitation projects around Newton: Hammond Pond Parkway, Livingston Cove at Crystal Lake, and the Marty Sender Trail at Auburndale Cove.

Our Grants Committee supported several important projects this past year. The Conservators continued scholarship support for the popular Environmental Science Program for teens. We assisted the Newton Community Farm in purchasing a “smart cart” for moving plants and produce around the farm. Funds also were allocated to a “Spring Container Gardening” program at the Newton Housing Authority’s Horace Mann complex, with assistance from Newton Neighbors and the Newton Community Farm. This project will involve a diverse group of individuals and groups in growing both produce and flowers and includes gardening lectures by Community Farm personnel. Previous grant support was given to initiate development of environmentally friendly pollinator friendly gardens across many areas of Newton. This trend has continued as more and more native plantings are appearing on the Newton landscape.

We thank our volunteer board members and advisors for the many hours they put in towards our mission of educating individuals to preserve and protect our open spaces. This includes spending time in meetings, planning activities, reviewing grant proposals, and supporting trail improvement. Our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) team continues its mission of making our open spaces and organization open and welcoming to all. The DEIJ team continues to learn from and share experiences with like-minded organizations such as the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition.

After serving as our co-presidents for the past two years, Chris Hepburn and Bill Hagar will be moving on to other activities in the coming year – a couple of older academics ready to turn over the leadership mantle. (We will, however, remain active members of the board.)

We end with quotes from Rachel Carson:

“Those who dwell, as scientists or laymen, among the beauties and mysteries of the earth, are never alone or weary of life.”

“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.”

Bill Hagar Chris Hepburn

Bill Hagar and Chris Hepburn
Co-Presidents, Newton Conservators

Annual Meeting 2023

The Newton Conservators 62nd Annual Meeting

May 24, 2023

Featuring Norman Smith, Raptor Specialist, Mass Audubon Snowy Owls to Saw-whet Owls

Newton Conservators' outgoing Co-President Chris Hepburn welcomed the audience to the Conservators' first outdoor annual meeting and called on the Conservators' incoming president Alice Ingerson to offer a land acknowledgement. Alice spoke about the work of the board's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Committee over the last several years and quoted some important points made at the Conservators' 2022 annual meeting on Zoom by our guest speakers, Massachusetts Tribal Elder Elizabeth Solomon and Massachusetts Sagamore Faries Gray. Elizabeth asked us to think about how we can be in a "reciprocal relationship" with nature, "neither using it as a resource nor seeing it as something static to protect." She urged us to see this relationship as what she called a "continuous flowing" in which "we give to nature as frequently and as much as we can take from nature." Faries reminded us that human beings have become "a problem that is not sustainable," and that "we all need to work together to fix the problem, regardless of where on the planet our ancestors are from." We're hoping that the Newton Conservators can help to build truly reciprocal relationships between culture and people, no matter where our ancestors are from.

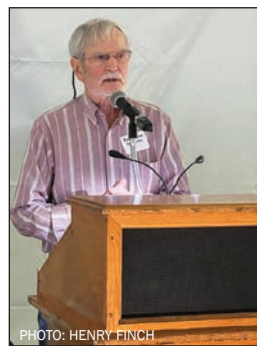


*Newton Mayor
Ruthanne Fuller*

Mayor Ruthanne Fuller also spoke about the concerns of the Massachusetts and other native peoples. She then recognized the Newton officials who were present at the Conservators' banquet despite the wind and rain. Mayor Fuller described Green Newton President Marcia Cooper, recipient of the Environmentalist of the Year Award, as "the epitome of somebody that does this important work by creating communities who work with her." She called directors' award winner Luis Perez Demorizi, the city's Director of Parks and Open Space within the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department, "extraordinary in his knowledge, his emotional intelligence and his belief in conservation, and recreation and doing it in the right balance." She commended State Representative

Ruth Balser for her long record of open space advocacy, and Phillip Saunders, Jr, organizing on behalf of the Public Lands Protection Act as a permanent, lasting legacy across the Commonwealth. Finally, Mayor Fuller thanked Newton Conservators' co-presidents Chris Hepburn and Bill Hagar for their leadership of the past few years.

Nominating Committee



*Nominating committee chair
Pete Gilmore*

Nominating committee chair Pete Gilmore presented the slate of officers and directors for the coming year, and it was voted on and elected by the membership. Alice Ingerson was elected as the new Conservators' president with Nyssa Patten as vice president, replacing past co-presidents Chris Hepburn and Bill Hagar who will remain on the board. Michael Clarke continues as secretary and Katherine Howard as treasurer. The board of directors will consist of David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Bonnie Carter, Samantha Corbin, Margaret Doris, Henry Finch, Maurice Gilmore, Daniel Green, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, George Mansfield, Larry Smith, and Beth Wilkinson.

2023 Newton Conservators' Awards

Environmentalist of the Year Award

The Environmentalist of the Year Award, first presented in 1981, goes to the individual or group that has made the greatest contribution to the protection of Newton's environment. The award this year went to Marcia Cooper, President, Green Newton, for her enthusiasm and devotion to a sustainable world for future generations, for



*Green Newton President
Marcia Cooper*

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thoughtfully inspiring Newton students to join and lead local environmental actions, and for consistently building Green Newton as a widely trusted source for guidance to green the home and fight the climate crisis.

Directors' Awards



PHOTO: HENRY FINCH
Luis Perez Demorizi

Three Directors' Awards were presented. These are given to individuals who have made significant contributions to the preservation of open space in Newton. The first went to Luis Perez Demorizi, Director of Parks and Open Space, City of Newton for his impressive effectiveness in making tangible improvements to Newton's parks and open spaces. He was also recognized for his skilled management of multiple projects, from design through construction, for his assistance with the Conservators' monitoring of conservation restrictions, and for helping the community reimagine how open space can function better for the public.



PHOTO: HENRY FINCH
*Ruth Balser (left) and
Alice Ingerson (right)*

The second Directors' Award went to Ruth Balser, State Representative, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, for her continuing advocacy for open space in the Commonwealth and support of the mission of Newton Conservators. She was also recognized for her persistent co-sponsorship and ultimate success in the Massachusetts Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA), which was signed into law on November 17, 2022. For more than two decades, Representative Balser worked for the adoption of the PLPA, to reinforce Article 97 of the Amendments to the Massachusetts Constitution, which mandates no net loss of publicly-owned parklands without a two-thirds vote of the Legislature.



PHOTO: KEN MALLORY
*Philip Saunders' daughter
Elizabeth, his wife Lucy,
and daughter Cathy with
Alice Ingerson*

The final Directors' Award went posthumously to Philip Saunders, Jr., Organizer, Public Lands Protection Act. For more than twenty-five years, Philip Saunders, Jr., was an enthusiastic and tireless advocate for the PLPA, which would codify as law the state's "No Net Loss" policy for public lands. He and Representative Balser worked as a team to accomplish that goal.

Phil educated and organized open-space activists in many communities to help pass the legislation. He wrote what he called "Cliffs Notes" about the law and shared that knowledge with everyone who would listen. Sadly, Phil did not live to see this policy enacted into law, but he was active in promoting it until the final months of his life. Phil's daughter Elizabeth, his wife Lucy, and daughter Cathy were present to accept the award.

*Thanks very much to our friends for their
generous and continuing support!*

SPONSORS

Nahanton Paddler — Platinum Sponsor
Paddle Boston

Dolan Pond Nester — Gold Sponsor
Lalor and Patricia Burdick
Lucy Caldwell-Stair
The Village Bank

Crystal Lake Swimmer — Silver Sponsor
Crystal Lake Conservancy

Newton Community Farm Harvester — Friend of Newton Conservators
Fulfilled Goods LLC
Willis Wang

Annual Meeting Keynote speaker Norman Smith



PHOTO: COURTESY NORMAN SMITH

After the business meeting and awards, Norman Smith, Raptor Specialist from Mass Audubon, presented a captivating slideshow of the work he has done over the years observing, capturing,



PHOTO: KEN MALLORY

*Norman Smith introduces a
Great Horned owllet at the
2023 Newton Conservators'
Annual meeting.*

banding, and relocating Snowy Owls at Logan International Airport. He described how his work with children who think out of the box shattered some longstanding beliefs about the lives of owls, and informed practices around the world on how to protect and manage these magnificent creatures. He showed how this project developed in an unusual way to include research on Saw-whet Owls. His slides, sense of humor, and depth of knowledge were remarkable. He ended the evening with a live and moving presentation of an orphaned seven-week-old Great Horned owllet. ♦

Newton Biological Survey — Surveying Plants and Animals in our Parks and Conservation Lands

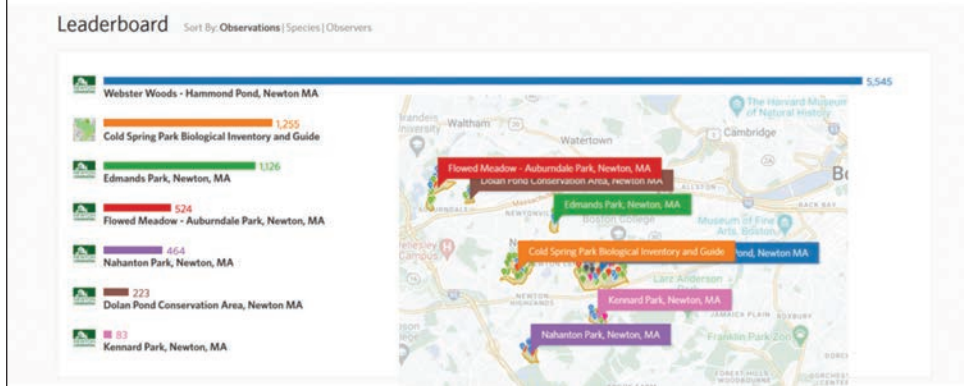
(see the special events section of the newsletter)

Newton's parks and conservation lands provide important habitat for a great diversity of plants and animals. While trees such as oak (red, black, and white) are common and relatively well known, other species such as [fingernail clams](#) and the [Rock Harlequin](#), a

beautiful wildflower, may be less familiar. How many bird species breed in our conservation lands, or how many ferns can be found there, and how might this change over time in response to climate change or other factors? Some of the plants or animals occupying our conservation lands may be particularly vulnerable to invasive species or require other management to address threats.

Fortunately, 19th century naturalists collected baseline information on the flora and fauna of the woods of Concord and the Middlesex Fells, allowing modern biologists, including Conservators' Advisor Richard Primack to detect changes over time (in studies in [Concord](#) and the [Fells](#)). These changes may include changes in species composition — for example loss of some native species and the introduction of new invasive species, or other changes such as earlier flowering or emergence times in response to climate change. While collecting baseline data to understand the biological diversity and health of Newton open spaces is a key goal of conducting biological inventories, it is not the only goal. Engaging community members and students in surveys and “BioBlitz” events provides a wonderful opportunity to learn plant and animal identification skills and helps to build the next generation of amateur naturalists and conservation professionals. These skills can enhance our understanding of ecology and enrich our outdoor recreational experiences. It is also fun to join with other community members in the field as we work together to identify species and document local biodiversity.

Do you have a favorite park you want to learn more about?



Graphic courtesy of Jon Regosin

With these goals in mind, in 2005, the Conservators began inventorying plants and animals at some Newton parks and conservation lands. That effort pre-dated the availability of modern tools such as the [app iNaturalist](#) and the [Native Plant Trust's Go-Botany](#) online plant

identification resource. iNaturalist can not only aid species identifications but can also serve as a repository for us to store and analyze data and track changes over time. Finally,



Graphic courtesy of Jon Regosin

iNaturalist provides a public-facing, user-friendly interface to immediately make useful information available to open space users. For example, a community member planning a June trip to Nahant Park can easily filter iNaturalist data to see which species have been observed in the park during June, or perhaps during the May-July window.

The Conservators are pleased to announce a series of BioBlitz events that will be taking place around the city this summer and fall to accompany the launch of a [related iNaturalist project](#). Events will include a series of site-specific surveys for plants and animals (no experience is necessary!) listed in the events section of the Conservators' website. In addition we will hold a webinar to explore

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iNaturalist, including the new Newton-based project, on Wednesday, September 13, at 7PM.

If you have any questions about the BioBlitz initiative or are interested in volunteering, please contact Jon Regosin, at

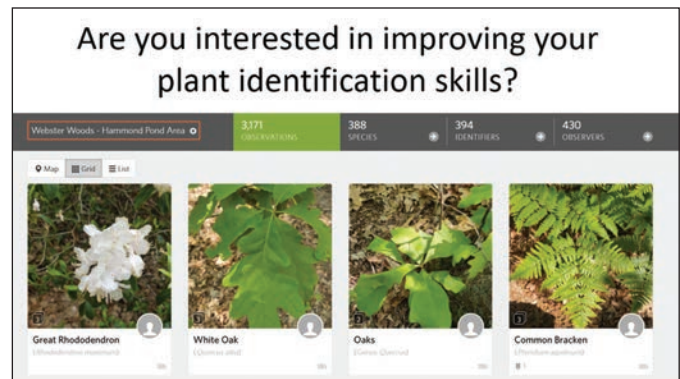
jonathan.regosin@gmail.com. Links to online references and examples mentioned in this article will be provided in the website version of this newsletter. ♦

✉ Jon Regosin

🌀 Newton BioBlitz — Special Events 🌀

Are you interested in learning more about how to identify native plants? Or maybe you are more interested in birds or butterflies? Did you ever wonder how many species of plants and animals inhabit Newton's parks and conservation areas? Maybe you have developed skills identifying ferns or pollinators and you want to share that knowledge with others? Or perhaps you are just curious to learn more about nature in Newton?

If this piques your interest, **join us for an upcoming Newton BioBlitz event!** We will spend a few hours surveying plants and animals, learning, and posting our observations to iNaturalist. You do not need to be an experienced naturalist or expert to participate. Families are welcome. To learn more about the Conservators' Newton BioBlitz, see the newsletter article on page 7.



Graphic courtesy of Jon Regosin

BioBlitz Events:

- Cold Spring Park BioBlitz — Saturday, June 17, 1-4 PM
- Webster Woods (west) BioBlitz — Sunday, July 16, 9-12 AM
- Dipnetting for aquatic invertebrates at Dolan Pond — Wednesday, July 26, 4-6 PM
- Nahanton Park BioBlitz — Sunday, September 10, 9-12 AM
- Late season pollinators and more — Hammond Woods, Saturday, September 23, 10 AM- 1 PM

To preregister for any of these events (encouraged but not required), go to: <https://forms.gle/LPweYr6xqE8DSLhC6>

You can also use this link to volunteer your expertise at these or future events.

iNaturalist	
Type of site	Citizen science
Available in	56 ^[1] languages
Area served	Worldwide
Owner	California Academy of Sciences and the National Geographic Society
Founder(s)	Ken-ichi Ueda Nate Agrin Jessica Kline
URL	inaturalist.org
Commercial	No
Registration	Optional
Users	▲ 3.2 million registered users (January 2023) ^[2]
Launched	2008; 15 years ago
Current status	Active

Darkness in Distress

By J. Kelly Beatty, Communications Officer for the or the International Dark-Sky Association's (IDA's) Massachusetts Chapter.

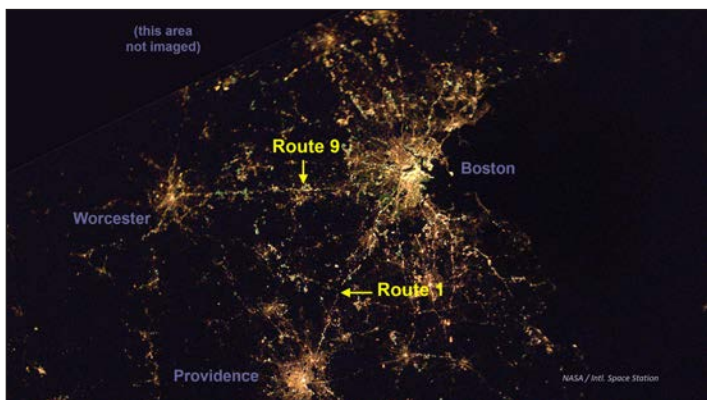
Thanks to light pollution, most of us have never seen the night sky in all its wonder. But a new mindset and new technology are poised to slow — and perhaps reverse — this bane of modern life.



Graphic courtesy of J. Kelly Beatty

Imagine driving through town as every fire hydrant gushes water into the street. Or stepping outside to find that the sprinkler system next door has gone berserk and is drenching the side of your house with a steady stream of water. That situation wouldn't last long — you'd quickly be giving City Hall and your neighbor an earful about it.

So why do we put up with the waste of so much light at night? 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. Most people associate lots of artificial light with enhanced safety and security at night (assumptions that are not well supported by evidence, by the way). Consequently, more lights get installed year after year, and our nights get brighter. And they're getting worse at an alarming rate. Research published January 20th in *Science* found that, over the past decade, the increase in nighttime skyglow has increased on average about 10% per year — far faster than had been thought.



Graphic courtesy of J. Kelly Beatty

Look around you the next time you're out at night. Much of the intense light generated by roadway and security fixtures never touches the ground. It never lights anyone's way, never provides any security, visibility, or guidance. Instead, it shines straight up into the sky. That ugly pall that envelops every city skyline is a collective consequence of all the streetlights that line our roadways, the over-the-top lighting at fast-food restaurants and gas stations, and even the intrusive glare from a neighbor's security light.

Without question, certain nighttime situations do require illumination. You wouldn't use an unlit ATM, or fumble in the dark with a gas pump. But when it comes to outdoor lighting, more is seldom better. Today, lighting scientists report, 99% of Americans live with light pollution to varying degrees, and more than two-thirds of us can't see the star-spangled Milky Way from our backyards.



Graphic courtesy of J. Kelly Beatty

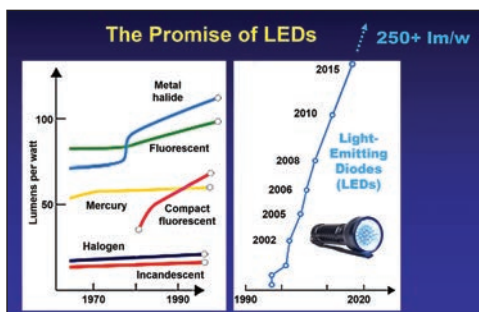
Light pollution robs us of more than the night sky's beauty. It's an in-your-face waste of energy. According to an estimate by the International Dark-Sky Association

(IDA), skyward-directed light squanders more than \$3 billion in electricity in the U.S. every year. Poorly designed lighting causes harsh glare that can blind and distract drivers, especially in bad weather and for elderly drivers with poor vision.

It didn't used to be this way. Electric streetlights have been around for more than a century, but it wasn't until the 1950s that General Electric and Westinghouse lined America's roadways with tens of millions of "cobrahead" streetlights that remain today. Then, around 1970, light bulbs filled with high-pressure sodium gas began to blanket the landscape with their dazzling, ubiquitous, peach-colored glare.

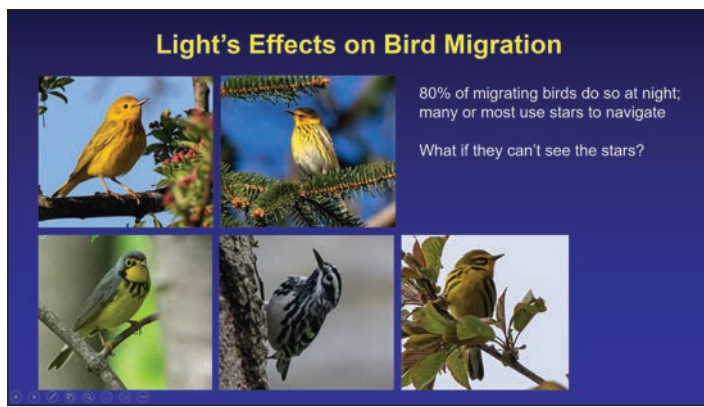
Now we are in the midst of the wholesale evolution of the nighttime environment wrought by light-emitting diodes (LEDs). Without question, LEDs provide dramatic improvements in energy efficiency, customization, and controllability over previous lighting technologies. But they also increase light pollution in two major ways. First, because they're so energy efficient, we are all tempted to install even brighter outdoor lighting because it's so inexpensive to do so.

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Graphic courtesy of J. Kelly Beatty

most profoundly (migrating birds, fireflies, and nocturnal pollinators, for example).



Graphic courtesy of J. Kelly Beatty

More ominous is a growing body of research suggesting that excessive blue light at night can disrupt the production of melatonin, a compound produced as we sleep — and only in darkness — that seems to play multiple roles in maintaining general human health. Clinicians around the world are racing to find out how disrupted darkness might impair the circadian (day-night) cycles. It's no wonder that the American Medical Society has declared not only that "Pervasive use of nighttime lighting disrupts various biological processes, creating potentially harmful health effects related to disability glare and sleep disturbance" (2012) but also has warned of the multiple harmful consequences of blue-rich lighting (2016).



Graphic courtesy of J. Kelly Beatty

Second, and most importantly, LEDs emit far more blue light than older lights do — and those blue photons create the most skyglow, and they disrupt the habits of nocturnal fauna

establishes lighting standards nationwide) to advance "Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting":

- All light should have a clear purpose.
- Light should be directed only to where needed.
- Light should be no brighter than necessary.
- Light should be used only when it is useful.
- Use warmer color lights where possible.

Fortunately, the spread of nighttime skyglow can be easily halted and even reversed. The most effective remedy is both simple and cost-effective: just make sure that all the light is directed downward, by using fixtures that send all their light below horizontal. Next, ensure that every outdoor light is no brighter than it needs to be — and is on only when necessary.

Then make sure that the outdoor lighting in our homes, businesses, municipal facilities, and streetlights emits as little blue light as possible. Get familiar with the concept of *correlated color temperature* (CCT), a metric that you'll now find on the packaging for any light you purchase. Ensure that its CCT value is no higher than 3000K (kelvins) and preferably lower.

I welcome your personal commitment to get involved. One person, asking the right question or offering informative comments at the right time and place, can have a positive and lasting impact on even major decisions involving outdoor lighting.

And while you're working locally to reduce light pollution locally, I'll be doing so at the state level. I've co-authored a bill, now pending in the Massachusetts Legislature, that would require all state- and municipally funded projects to install outdoor lighting that adheres to these common-sense principles. I urge you to contact your legislators to support and even co-sponsor SD.1219 or HD.2747 (identical versions were submitted to the Senate and House).

Think about this: light pollution is the only environmental threat that can be reversed or even eliminated easily — while saving money in the process. By reducing wasted light at night, energy use goes down. Environmental damage is reduced. We get to see more stars above. It's truly a win-win situation.

J. Kelly Beatty has been fighting light pollution locally, nationally, and internationally for more than three decades. He serves as Communications Officer for the IDA's Massachusetts Chapter ♦

► Black Swallow-wort Alert ◀



PHOTO: KEN MALLORY

Black Swallow-wort pods in summer and fall



Carolyn van der Laan

Black Swallow-wort flowers

Please be on the lookout for the black swallow-wort (BSW) vine, which is now everywhere. It's a non-native invader infesting Newton. It's in many of our yards and hides in hedges and shrubs. It reduces biodiversity and degrades our local environment, and, sadly, is fatal to monarch butterflies. Right now, it is in bloom with small purple flowers. Soon we will see the large seed pods forming. Starting in late summer the pods will dry and 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 have sessions scheduled into July 2023 (listed as Events on the website) and will add more sessions for the summer and fall. If you would like to be on the email list for notices of our group activities, please email Invasives@newtonconservators.org. Thank you! ♦

✿ Katherine Howard

Get Involved with the Conservators - Volunteers Needed

The Newton Conservators needs member volunteers to help with various events such as staffing tables at Newton's Village Days, the Harvest Fest, and others. These are fun events that give participants an opportunity to work with board members to learn more about Conservators' activities and to meet and distribute information about them to your neighbors. If you are willing to volunteer for a couple of hours at such events, it would be most appreciated. Please send an email to: president@newtonconservators.org and someone will contact you. Additional volunteer opportunities are listed on our website.

Thank you.

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.

Newton Conservators was formed as a not-for-profit organization 62 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.

Editor:	Ken Mallory	617-965-1908
Design/Layout:	Suzette Barbier	617-244-0266
Production:	Bonnie Carter	617-969-0686

Thanks to the following contributors to this edition of the Newsletter: J. Kelly Beatty, Dan Brody, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard and Jon Regosin.



NEWTON CONSERVATORS, INC.
P.O. Box 590011
Newton Centre, MA 02459

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Blackpoll Warbler
photo by Haynes Miller

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.