



Newton Conservators  
E-Bulletin  
Sunday, January 7, 2024

... preserving open space and connecting  
people to nature since 1961



## Happy New Year from Newton Conservators!

With today's snow and chill temperatures, it finally appears that winter is really here! Winter can be fun! Did you know that seeds planted in the fall rely on the winter conditions to sprout successfully in the spring. On January 20, Newton Conservators is co-sponsoring Newton's first winter seed sowing workshop. Check it out below. And for other winter fun this month, consider our Winter Walk at Cold Spring Park as part of Newton Pride's WinterFEST 2024. See details below. The [Winter 2023-2024 issue](#) of the Newton Conservators Newsletter is available on our website. And check out our [YouTube channel](#) to view our Fall Webinar Series videos.

Our updated volunteer webpage lists current opportunities to help with walks, conservation restrictions, invasive plants, biodiversity, and community events. To volunteer for any of these, or talk to us about sharing skills or interests we haven't already listed, please check out <https://newtonconservators.org/volunteer/>

Hope to see you out and about in Newton's open spaces this winter. We are busy planning a great lineup of events for the spring!

## Upcoming Events

**Saturday, January 20, 2024 (Snow Date, Sunday, January 21)**

### Winter Seed Sowing Workshop

[Morning Session: 11 am to 12:30 pm \(Registration\)](#)

[Afternoon Session: 1 pm to 2:30 pm \(Registration\)](#)

**Nahanton Park Nature Center, 471 Nahanton Street, Newton, MA**

Intentional Winter Seed Sowing creates a more ideal environment for seeds that allows us to control for many of those variables so that many more seeds sprout where you can locate them and nurture them along to grow big and strong. Learn to grow your own native plants from seed with a mini greenhouse crafted from an empty milk or water jug. Soil and native seeds will be provided and participants will get to bring home their own mini greenhouse made from a milk jug. This 1.5 hour workshop will give you the tools to spark your own pollinator garden. The FREE workshop will be led by Freddie Gillespie, founder of Biodiversity through Pollination. There will be a [Morning Session](#) and an [Afternoon Session](#). **Pre-registration is required.** Each session will be limited to 20 attendees so sign up early. If they are full, you can add your name to a waitlist for a possible future session.



Sowing seeds collected from native plants is a great way to generate lots of beneficial plants for very low cost. But unfortunately, success is not often as simple as putting a seed in the ground and having a seedling appear a week or two later. Many native plants have evolved to require exposure to the elements of a New England winter (fluctuating cold temperatures and varied moisture over a period of months) before they will sprout in the spring. During that winter and spring many things can happen to interfere with seeds successfully growing into strong and healthy plants - they may become food for birds, rodents, or other creatures, be washed away by rain or melting snow, be buried too deeply under soil or leaves, or not deeply enough, be exposed to too much or too little moisture at critical times. Click the Registration links above for either the morning or afternoon session.

The workshop sessions are FREE thanks to the generosity of our co-sponsors (a donation of \$5.00 would be appreciated.) The workshop can provide 2 translucent milk jugs, 2 packets of native seeds, soil, and additional supplies for each attendee. What to Bring: Scissors or other means to cut milk jugs. Optional you could bring up to 2 translucent gallon milk jugs and/or your own seeds if you wish.

The workshop is cosponsored by [Newton Conservators](#), [Friends of Cold Spring Park](#), [Newton Parks, Recreation & Culture Department](#), [Newton Community Pollinator Project \(NCP\)](#), [Green Newton](#), and [Friends of Nahanton Park](#). This is a project of the Newton Community Pollinator Project organized by Ann Dorfman, Alan Noguee and Ted Kuklinski. Channon Ames of Newton Parks, Recreation and Culture is the site coordinator. For questions, please contact Ann Dorfman (dorfmanann@comcast.net, 617-413-4901).

**Saturday, January 27, 2024, 10:00 am**  
**WinterFEST Walk at Cold Spring Park**  
**Cold Spring Park Beacon Street Trailhead (1200 Beacon St entrance)**  
<https://newtonconservators.org/events/winterfest-winter-walk-at-cold-spring-park/>  
**Part of the 3rd Annual Newton WinterFEST (January 27-28)**  
<https://newtoncommunitypride.org/winterfest/>

Save the date for the 3rd Annual WinterFEST organized by Newton Community Pride. Newton Conservators will again be part of it with a scheduled guided family-friendly winter walk at Cold Spring Park. Barbara Bates will be leading the walk and educating attendees on the natural wonders of Cold Spring Park. Last year's was a blast with so many participants, not to mention Olaf (from FROZEN), complimentary hot chocolate, dog treats and more! See a short [video](#) of last year's WinterFEST Walk on our [YouTube channel](#). Check out all the WinterFEST events on the Newton Community Pride WinterFEST page at <https://newtoncommunitypride.org/winterfest/>



**Saturday January 27th at 5:30 pm**  
**WinterFEST Soup Social**  
**Hyde Playground Bandstand, 90 Lincoln St.**

Join Newton Community Pride as we bring the heat to the Hyde with our WinterFest Soup Social! Enjoy live music from The Timba Messengers and visit with Officer Leo, the Newton community resource dog. Keep the heat going as you swivel your hips with glow-in-the-dark hula hoops, and brighten the night with an interactive light-up public art installation, Brighter Ignited.



**Sunday, January 28th, 11 am**  
**WinterFEST on the Green**  
**Newton Centre Green**

Gather with your Newton neighbors on the Newton Centre Green to meet Elsa from Disney's Frozen and her other winter friends, paint a plow with Newton's DPW, watch a live ice sculpture demonstration, and enjoy live entertainment while sipping complimentary hot chocolate! The performance schedule includes Tokalli Macehualli, an Indigenous dance troupe, a local student jazz group, ZOVA Quartet, Elsa and Olaf from Disney's Frozen, Newton North's Melocotones and Northern Lights a capella groups, Boston College B.E.A.T.S, and Lion Dance presented by Wu An Martial Arts. Don't forget to shop at our pop-up Winter Market, featuring a diverse group of local crafters, artists, and creatives. Vendors range from photography, soapmakers and painters, to your pet needs, custom stationary, and even beard balms!

**Sunday January 28th, 3 pm**  
**WinterFEST Dance Party**  
**New Art Center, 61 Washington Park**

Join Newton Community Pride and The New Art Center for our newest WinterFEST event; a fun, family-friendly dance party with Josh and the Jamtones! There will be complimentary hot chocolate and cookies, as well as a fun winter craft!

**Keep up to date on our events on**  
**our [website](https://newtonconservators.org/events/) at <https://newtonconservators.org/events/>**

**2023 Fall Webinar Series Videos**  
**Now Available on our [YouTube Channel!](#)**

In case you missed some of the webinars the past few months, they are now available on our Newton Conservators YouTube channel. Click the title links below to view the particular webinar. To get to our YouTube channel from our website, click the "Play" button on the main menu ribbon.

- [Using iNaturalist to Improve Your Identification Skills](#)  
Jon Regosin, Naturalist  
September 13, 2023
- [Why We Should Remove the Watertown Dam](#)  
Lisa Kumpf and Robert Kearns, CRWA  
September 28, 2023
- [Springers and Singers: The Art and Science of Observing Orthoptera](#)  
Matt Pelikan, Naturalist  
October 18, 2023
- [Talking Turkey: Why Are There So Many Turkeys?](#)  
Barbara Bates, Teacher / Naturalist  
November 9, 2023

## Newton Conservators Newsletter

The Winter 2023-2024 edition of our Newton Conservators is now available on our [website](#).



# NEWSLETTER

Preserving open space and connecting people to nature since 1961

NEWTONCONSERVATORS.ORG • WINTER 2023-2024

### 2023-24 Officers, Directors and Advisors

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## Let the Charles River Run Free: The Case for Removing the Watertown Dam

By Julia Hopkins, Communication and Outreach Manager with Lisa Kumpf, River Science & Restoration Program Manager, Charles River Watershed Association

**W**atertown Dam is a highly visible site on a nationally iconic river; its existence has long been opposed by Indigenous people, it does not serve a purpose, and its presence negatively impacts the river. Removing the dam, restoring fish passage, and healing the river is a transformative, positive act in a time of great change and uncertainty. Learn more at [crwa.org/dam-removal](https://crwa.org/dam-removal) and at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/>.

For over 400 years, the Charles River has been altered, controlled, and dammed to bend to the will of industry and profit.



Aerial photo of the Watertown Dam

The river we know today is not free — but instead, is a river radically changed by the long history of human intervention. We dammed its waters to power industry, leaving a legacy of toxic pollution in our wake. We straightened its gentle meanders, buried its tributaries, and hardened its shores, constricting its natural flow. We drained and filled its wetlands to free up more land and let our parking lots sprawl right up to its banks.

Now, we are facing the consequences. Today, our river and all who depend on it suffer from our attempt to control nature — polluted water quality from stormwater runoff, impeded fish passage by aging, defunct dams, invasive species growth, harmful cyanobacteria blooms, and biodiversity loss. Climate change is amplifying these impacts. We took away our river's natural resilience to adapt to the challenges of increased precipitation, stronger storms, drought, and extreme heat — and now all of us, but especially our most vulnerable, are at risk.



Quote from Robert Kearns, Climate Resilience Specialist

We are at a critical juncture — the time is now to reverse the antagonistic relationship we've built with the river by setting it free.

### A River Interrupted

Before colonization, the Charles River flowed freely, and Indigenous ancestors relied on its vibrant population of migratory fish for food, water, and cultural survival. Each spring, the Charles River historically welcomed hundreds of thousands of migratory fish from the depths of the ocean to the river's numerous lakes, ponds, and

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This [Winter 2023-2024 Newsletter](#) contains the following interesting features:

- [Let the Charles River Run Free: The Case for Removing the Watertown Dam](#)
- [The Community Way Forward – A Green Connector for Newton and Needham](#)
- [History of Newton Parks, Playgrounds & Recreation: Winter Sports](#)
- [The Brilliant Abyss, book review by Pete Gilmore](#)
- [Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, Levingston Cove, Newton Parks, Recreation & Culture](#)
- [Invasives Update](#)

## PLEASE JOIN OR RENEW YOUR NEWTON CONSERVATORS MEMBERSHIP

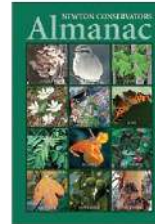


We would be most grateful if you renewed your membership or joined us officially for the first time to support our important open space work! The challenges of protecting, enhancing and expanding open space in Newton continue. We hope that you will continue to support the Conservators efforts in these regards by renewing your membership for 2024 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!

Our [Trail Guide](#) and [Nature Almanacs](#) make great holiday presents and are available on our website. The Trail Guide is included as part of your initial membership package.

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.*

- E-Bulletin Editor: Ted Kuklinski, Newton Conservators ([ebulletin@newtonconservators.org](mailto:ebulletin@newtonconservators.org))

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