

WALKS SCHEDULE FALL 2024

www.newtonconservators.org

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

Saturday, Sept. 14 from 9:30 - 11:30 am

CIRCUMNAVIGATING WEBSTER WOODS



Join Barbara Bates for a two-hour walk, co-sponsored by Arc'teryx Chestnut Hill, that roughly circumnavigates Webster Woods, about 1.5-2 miles. We will see several different habitats, including upland woods, a granite/pudding stone dome, vernal pool, marsh, and a wetlands stream, and we'll discuss each habitat's natural history as we go. There will be rocky places, slippery leaves, and one steep section where you may wish to use trekking pole(s). Registration is required on our website, and a waitlist 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)

Saturday, Sept. 21 from 8:30 - 10 am

NATURE WALK THROUGH SAW MILL BROOK CONSERVATION AREA



We'll walk through upland woods and wetlands, and by old stone fences and dramatic puddingstone outcroppings. We will include the adjoining "new" section acquired in 2004 and blazed in recent years. We will walk from Vine Street to Marla Circle and return back along the brook, about 1.2 miles in total. We'll look out for the dozen ferns Don Lubin has shown us here, and maybe see the fisher again that he also showed us! The trail is "natural," mostly flat, but uneven and rocky underfoot, and there are parts over wetlands that are traversed on wood planks called "bog bridges".

Meet at the entrance on Vine Street, close to 5 Hollywood Drive. The walk will be canceled in the event of steady rain. Check the website or call the leader if in doubt.

Trip Leader: Katherine Howard (617-721-2571)

Saturday, Sept. 28 from 8:30 - 10 am

A VISIT TO HOUGHTON GARDEN



This wild garden, tucked into Chestnut Hill and abutting Webster Woods, is on the National Register of Historic Places. Its paths wind around a stream and lagoon-like pond with water features designed by Warren Manning, who formerly worked for the Olmsted studio. Explore this hidden gem of a

conservation area with its land steward, Michele Hanss of the Friends of Houghton Garden. The walk will be rescheduled in the event of steady rain.

Meet at the park entrance near 207 Suffolk Rd.

Trip Leader: Michele Hanss (617-285-9107)

Sunday, Oct. 6 from 8 - 10:30 am

BIRDING AT NAHANTON PARK



PHOTO: KEN MALLORY

Co-sponsored by Friends of Nahanton Park. Enjoy a leisurely walk through Nahanton Park, Newton, looking especially for migrant warblers and sparrows. Binoculars and waterproof shoes are recommended. Canceled in case of steady rain. Look for a

gathering at the entrance to the path to the lower gardens at the Winchester St. entrance.

Trip Leader: Haynes Miller (617-413-2419)

Saturday, Oct. 19 from 9:30 - 11:30 am

COLD SPRING PARK TOUR



PHOTO: KEN MALLORY

Tour Cold Spring Park with Alan Noguee, President of Friends of Cold Spring Park. See the difference between healthy areas of the park with indigenous plant communities that support local wildlife and degraded sections overrun with invasive species and see where we are

working on ecological restoration. Learn some surprising park history.

Meet at the kiosk at the end of the Beacon St parking lot. Registration is optional to hear of cancellation or rescheduling in bad weather.

Trip Leader: Alan Noguee (617-821-1265)

Saturday, Oct. 26 from 9 - 11 am

RIVERSIDE TRAIL UPDATES



PHOTO: KEN MALLORY

Explore some of the many exciting trail and park updates happening in the Riverside area with Ted Chapman of the Riverside Greenway Working Group. The tour may include Riverside Park at the Lasell Boathouse pedestrian bridge, the Pigeon Hill trail, the Pony Truss trail, the Commonwealth Ave Greenway, or the Marty Sender Trail. The exact itinerary and meeting spot will be announced in advance on the website's

events page. The walk will be rescheduled in the event of steady rain.

Trip Leader: Ted Chapman (617-680-5278)

Saturday, Nov. 2 @ 2 pm

THE SECRETS OF BARE POND



Bare Pond in the Webster is a remarkable vernal pond that is home to spotted salamanders and other amphibians. It has many other unusual and surprising features of rocks, hydrology, topography, and trees. In this

walk, Richard Primack will share what he has learned about the pond during an intensive study over the past nine months.

Meet at 1:40 pm at the end of Elgin Street and walk from there. Alternatively, meet at 2 pm at the bench at Bare Pond.

Trip Leader: Richard Primack (857-636-8378), Professor of Plant Ecology at Boston University and lifelong Newton resident, primack@bu.edu. If you plan to attend, please let Richard know beforehand by email. Rain date: November 9.



Graphic courtesy of vecteezy.com

► Invasives Update ◀



Black swallow-wort pods in summer and fall

The work of our invasives team continues. We will meet throughout the fall and also plan winter work. Join us for fun, educational, and much-needed work, giving back to our open spaces!

As the Mayor's newsletter recently highlighted, it is now prime black swallow-wort (BSW) season. Be on the lookout for this vine, a non-native invader infesting Newton, often hiding in hedges and shrubs. It reduces biodiversity and degrades our local environment, and, sadly, is fatal to monarch butterflies (it's in the milkweed family, and when monarchs mistakenly lay eggs on it, the larvae die because it is not the right milkweed). Right now, the small purple flowers have turned into large seed pods, which are starting to dry and open. The wind will disperse the seeds on white fibers to make the infestation even worse.



Black swallow-wort flowers

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 pull off the seed pods to prevent further spread. Put everything 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 his link for BSW: <https://newtonconservators.org/black-swallow-wort/>

Newton Conservators conducts many work sessions year-round to protect Newton's open spaces and manage invasive species. 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

MISSION Newton Conservators, Inc.

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 63 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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