

Enjoy Nature... with Webinars from Newton Conservators

Join us for our Fall/Winter Webinar Series online from mid-September through mid-March.

Each online 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.



Lady slipper

Thursday, Oct. 9 ... Phenology Shows the Biological Effects of Climate Change

The most sensitive biological indicator of climate change is phenology, the timing of events. As a result of a warming climate, plants and animals are now active earlier in the spring and are extending their activities later in the autumn. New England provides some of the most exciting and iconic examples of phenology, due to its abundance of historical sources, extensive weather records, and rapidly changing climate. In this webinar, Richard Primack will describe the state of phenology research in Massachusetts and elsewhere and show how everyone can contribute to this exciting field.

Richard Primack is Professor of Plant Ecology at Boston University and a lifelong Newton resident. For 50 years, Primack and his students have carried out phenological observations in the Boston area, including at Concord, Massachusetts, and the Arnold Arboretum. Primack is also the author of widely used textbooks in Conservation Biology and the author of the popular book: *Walden Warming, Climate Change Comes to Thoreau's Woods*.

Sign up: <https://shorturl.at/RtJGr>



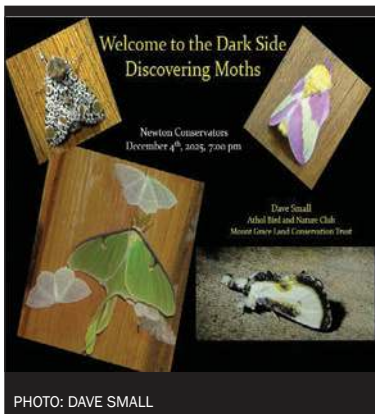
Jeff Moore of the NFC and Jon Regosin at Cold Spring Brook

Thursday, Nov. 13 ... Fish, the Missing Link in Suburban/Urban Conservation

Growing up in Newton Highlands in the 1960s and 70s, Bob Mallard was fascinated with the network of streams within striking distance of his home. These streams wove their way through Cold Spring Park, Newton Center Cemetery, Newton Free Library, Newton City Hall, and Albemarle Park, behind houses and businesses and under roads, parking lots, schools, and playgrounds. He learned to connect the subterranean and above ground, or daylighted, sections of stream by exploring, peering into storm drains, and studying maps. These streams have been straightened, dredged, moved, walled in, and buried. They are subject to municipal stormwater inputs as well as other point and non-point pollution. But there is still life in these heavily manipulated and often overlooked waters, including fish. Bob will discuss the importance of native fish, the impact of nonnative fish, as well as what the Native Fish Coalition has learned about Cold Spring Brook and Cheesecake Brook.

Bob Mallard was born and raised on Lake Avenue in Newton Highlands. A lifelong angler, he owned and operated a fly-fishing shop in Maine for 15 years after retiring from high tech. Bob has written hundreds of articles on fish and fishing across dozens of publications, as well as five nationally distributed fly-fishing books. In 2017, Bob helped found Native Fish Coalition of Maine. Today, NFC boasts 21 state chapters from Maine to Arkansas, including Massachusetts, and northwest to Wisconsin, with Bob serving as the Executive Director.

Sign up: <https://shorturl.at/0Cq8z>



Thursday, Dec. 4 ... Welcome to the Dark Side: Discovering Moths

Join naturalist Dave Small for an introduction to attracting and watching moths in your backyard. Discover the native plants you can introduce to your landscape to attract a wide variety of butterflies and moths. Learn how to use lights and bait to attract moths for viewing and get a glimpse of some of the moths you might encounter on a warm summer evening.

Dave is the Director of Conservation leading a team of land protection specialists in fulfilling the mission of Mount Grace in protecting our open spaces. Dave retired in 2013 after 35 years with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, where he served as Assistant Regional Director at the DCR Quabbin Reservoir. His dedication to conservation and natural history continues as he leads a team tasked with protecting the landscapes he loves.

Sign up: <https://shorturl.at/8keDR>



Thursday, March 5, 2026 ... Vernal Pools and Their Special Ecology

Seasonal ponds, known as vernal pools, are full of life and can be found throughout our area. Newton has several, including Bare Pond in Webster Woods. Join Newton Conservators' Barbara Bates to discover how these pools form, their unique ecology, and the life stories of the invertebrates and amphibians who inhabit these pools. See fairy shrimp, salamanders, wood frogs, and many more.

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

Sign up: <https://shorturl.at/MGhZd>

Looking for life in a vernal pool

Did You Miss the Webinar "Floodlights & Fireflies"? You Can Watch it Online at Any Time.



Since September 2020, Newton Conservators has presented a free webinar series on conservation topics important to our community. Many of our speakers have allowed us to record their presentations; find them on our YouTube page. (The button is at the top right of our website.)

In each newsletter, we plan to highlight one of these past webinar gems. This time, we focus on Dr. Avalon Owens' presentation on "Floodlights and Fireflies: Environmental Sustainability Starts in Your Front Yard" from the fall of 2024: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IgwMhpJZHs>

Insect populations around the world are declining rapidly. But why? While habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change all have something to do with it, Dr. Owens shows in this talk that light pollution is another important — but too often overlooked — factor in the insect apocalypse. Light pollution interferes with the development, movement, foraging, courtship, and reproduction of diverse insect species, including many that we know and love to see in our gardens. Fortunately, light pollution can be cheaply, easily, and instantly eliminated, and Dr. Owens explains how we can do that.

Avalon Owens is a research fellow at the Rowland Institute at Harvard. Her research group studies the impact of light pollution on organisms and ecosystems, with a focus on firefly conservation and moth evolution. Avalon holds a B.A. in Integrative Biology from Harvard University, an M.S. in Entomology from National Taiwan University, and a Ph.D. in Biology from Tufts University.

Information about upcoming webinars can be found under the "Events" tab on Newton Conservators' website, where you can register for them: <https://newtonconservators.org/events/>. Our webinars are free and available to all. ♦

🌿 Beth Wilkinson and Barbara Bates