NEWTON CONSERVATORS

FALL ISSUE

NEWSLETTER

Preserving open space and connecting people to nature since 1961

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Learning from Cheesecake Brook

By Max Rome, Senior Stormwater Manager at Charles River Watershed Association, Edited by Carly Sherman, Communications Associate at Charles River Watershed Association

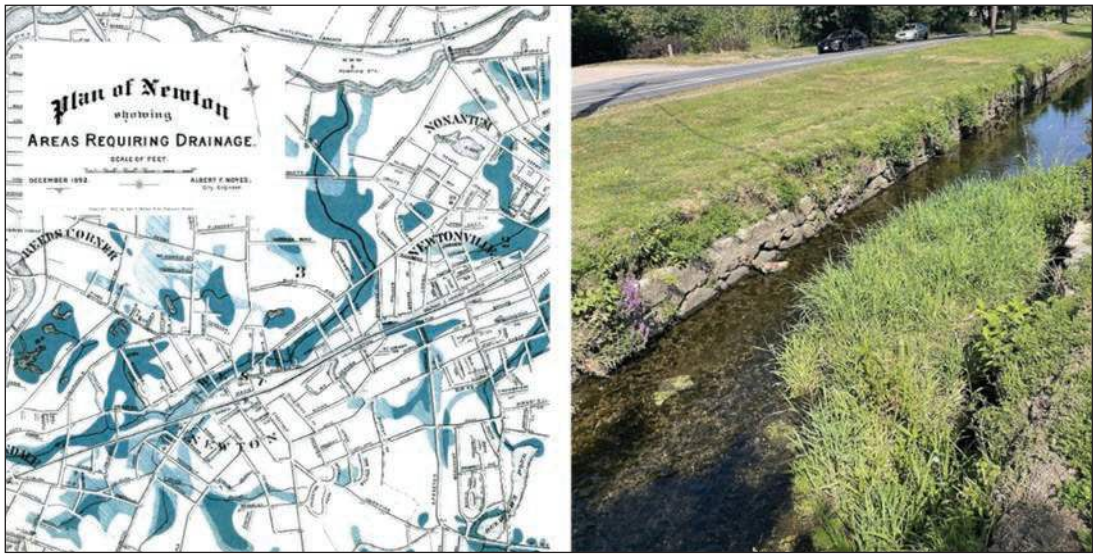

Figure 1. *Left, in an 1892 map, wetland and riparian corridor around Cheesecake Brook are identified as "Areas Requiring Drainage." Right, as chunks of turf fall into the brook they begin to recreate a meandering flow pattern, and provide valuable habitat within the confines of the channel.*

Newton's Cheesecake Brook tells the story of urbanization and our shifting attitudes about the natural environment. Previous interventions, which focused on drainage (Figure 1) and creating usable land, resulted in a stream with degraded water quality and ecology that is prone to harmful flooding. Today, restoration efforts are writing a new chapter in the brook's history to mitigate flooding, increase ecological health, and create a riparian corridor that is an amenity to the public. These efforts are an essential part of the ongoing clean-up of the Charles River. For the Charles, addressing untreated stormwater runoff is the key step for achieving the Clean Water Act's goal of a fishable-swimmable river that is free from bacterial contamination and harmful algal blooms. After Boston, Newton is the second largest source of stormwater pollution into the river.

Before colonization, Cheesecake Brook, like much of the Charles River Watershed, was an interconnected series of wooded streams and wetlands. With spring rains and snow-melt, high flows would seasonally change the course of the brook, overtop its banks, and reunite the river to its floodplain. Eroded soils carried by fast-moving water were deposited along the edges of the brook, providing gently sloping deposits of sediment perfect for wetland plants and maintaining an ever-changing patchwork of complex habitat in what ecologists call "dynamic equilibrium."

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…Learning from Cheesecake Brook continued from page 1

Over the years, human activity has dramatically reshaped the brook. Maps from the 1700s show four roads crossing the brook as it flows through large tracts of farmland and past a few scattered homes. In the late 1800s, the construction of the Boston & Albany Railroad bisected the northern and southern portions of the brook, resulting in dense development and dozens of stream crossings. By the 1920s, much of the northern stretch of the brook was surrounded by dense housing lots. The Albemarle roadway formalized and constrained the path of the brook in its modern alignment. This project, which was initially part of the 1893 metropolitan plan, was conceived of as a way to preserve the brook, allowing the bordering neighborhood to face a central green corridor.

By the 1930s, these successive waves of residential development had created a new hydrologic regime, one in which rainwater flowed quickly off roofs and paved city streets into municipal storm drains before being discharged directly to the brook. In 1937, the Works Public Administration deepened the Albemarle Channel and constructed the masonry walls that we see today. Paradoxically, the consequence of "improved drainage" was significant and harmful flooding.

Today, the brook suffers from what watershed scientists refer to as "urban stream syndrome": patterns of natural drainage have been replaced by a "flashy" system in which water levels rise rapidly following precipitation and decrease dramatically during periods of drought. This leads to high water temperatures (Fig. 2), water pollution, and degraded habitat.

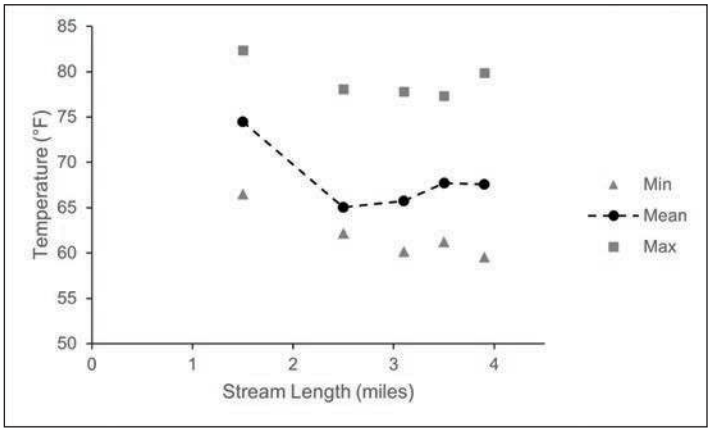


Figure 2. *During the daytime, June-July temperatures in Cheesecake Brook reach into the 80s, creating hazardous conditions for many aquatic organisms. The brook is already warm as it flows out of the Brae Burn Country Club impoundment and behind McGrath Field. The brook cools substantially as it flows underground through one mile of buried culvert and begins to heat up again as it flows through exposed areas along Albemarle.*

Over the past few years, Charles River Watershed Association has partnered with the City of Newton to address these concerns. This year, the city completed installation of a 50,000 CF infiltration system beneath Albemarle Park along Craft Street that diverts stormwater from a seven-acre residential drainage area, letting it soak slowly into the ground and virtually eliminating stormwater pollution. By next summer, over one acre of stream bank will be replanted with native perennials, shrubs, and trees to recreate a native habitat along the brook for the first time in nearly 100 years. These efforts alone will not fix the brook, but they represent scalable solutions that can be used up and down Cheesecake Brook and throughout its 3.2 square mile watershed.

Despite its challenges, Cheesecake Brook is not dead! Today, the masonry walls are nearly 90 years old, and in many places, they have started to cave inwards. Generations of turf have accreted above the walls and periodically slough into the channel, creating spontaneous grass wetlands. These wetlands interrupt the uniform flow of the brook, creating thin fast-moving riffles that scour out small deeper pools, and forming slow moving eddies where fish can rest.

Figure 3. *A juvenile white sucker collected from below the Craft Street Bridge (image courtesy of Jeff Moore, Native Fish Coalition).*

On a recent visit to the brook, the water ran clear approaching one of the grassy islands. I saw multiple blue damselflies and heard the plunk of a frog into the water. Fish swim in the brook's waters, including a handful of minnows I watched (Figure 3) scatter upstream, out of the shade in which they were hiding. Despite its constraints, life-generating natural processes are still at work in Cheesecake Brook! Our values are different than those of earlier generations; we understand that wetlands support aquatic health and that riparian corridors enhance urban areas and are essential for preserving biodiversity. By partnering with nature, we can recreate natural hydrology around the brook to boost baseflows, cool water temperature, reduce pollution, and create a restored urban stream that can sustain the next generation of Newton residents. ◆

Could Bugging be the New Birding? (Part 1)

Editor's Note: This article is in two parts, the first here in the fall 2025 newsletter and the second in the winter 2025-26 newsletter that will follow.

Henshaw Haven front yard pollinator garden

Birding is one of the most popular leisure activities in the United States; a 2024 study[1] indicated that approximately 96 million people participate in some form of it. What makes birding so appealing? People enjoy immersing themselves in a relaxing natural environment. Birding is an accessible activity suitable for all ages, pursuable anywhere, whether alone or in a group, and it doesn't necessitate extensive equipment. It actively engages and challenges one's senses in the quest to find and identify birds. Numerous resources, including apps and printed guides, are available to assist, and many birders take pleasure in documenting their discoveries. Furthermore, birds are beautiful creatures whose songs can be a true musical delight. One certainly doesn't need to be an ornithologist to enjoy birding.

For many birding enthusiasts, the peak excitement occurs in early to mid-May, when native birds such as catbirds, swifts, and orioles return from their wintering grounds, and colorful warblers pass through on their northward journey. However, for me, a sense of disappointment arises toward the end of May as the number of migrating birds dwindles. During the pandemic, I realized that another similar outdoor nature pursuit had many of the same advantages as birding. As the spring flowers started blooming, insects of all types that may have been unnoticed in past years appeared in our front yard garden, which was awakening week by week. A new pastime was born — bugging!

Northern Cardinal
Cardinalis cardinalis

Red Milkweed Beetle
Tetraopes tetrophthalmus

Colorful creatures in both birding and bugging

In recent decades, both bird and insect populations have faced severe declines, largely due to pesticides and habitat loss. Land birds are heavily reliant on insects for sustenance, especially larvae such as caterpillars. Correspondingly, many native insects depend on native plants for food, including their leaves, pollen, and nectar. This is particularly true for pollinators like bees, butterflies, and moths. In turn, native plants depend on these pollinating insects to transfer pollen. This forms an interdependent web of life that many of us are unaware of. Consequently, fewer pollinator plants lead to fewer insects, which ultimately means fewer birds.

A meticulously maintained green lawn, especially one marked with yellow pesticide warning signs, represents a desolate and unwelcoming space for other living things.

Continued next page

…Could Bugging be the New Birding (Part 1) continued from page 3

Also, many gardeners opt for non-native flowering plants based on their vibrant appearance, overlooking the fact that these often hold little to no attraction for native insects, even when lovely and colorful native alternatives are available. By allowing our front lawn to be overtaken by more native plants and not using pesticides, it has transformed into a far more inviting environment for both birds and insects — Henshaw Haven.

As a result, we've had many bird species nest in or around our yard, including cardinals, orioles, wrens, catbirds, nuthatches, mockingbirds, finches, and woodpeckers. Moreover, our yard's bug list now significantly surpasses our bird list, with new insect visitors being discovered frequently. Our front yard garden is situated on the north side of the house, receiving sun for only about half the day. Despite these conditions, native plants such as cat-mint, milkweeds, false sunflower, beebalm, goldenrod, and aster bloom successively throughout the season, creating a bustling hub of activity for our insect friends, especially when the sun shines on them. The few non-natives draw little traffic.

Our anchor plant is common milkweed, which originally arrived on the wind and is now interspersed throughout our front yard. It consistently draws monarch butterflies, which readily lay their eggs on the undersides of the leaves. Milkweed also serves as a significant attractant for leafhoppers, other butterflies, moths, beetles, flies, and various tiny critters. Unlike maintaining a bird feeder and purchasing seed, such plants naturally fulfill the role of a "bug feeder." Native plants can typically thrive on natural rainfall, except during very dry summers. Imagine bidding farewell to mowing and lawn sprinklers! One advantage of converting your yard into a native habitat is that you don't have to venture far to go bugging.

Bumble bee on milkweed

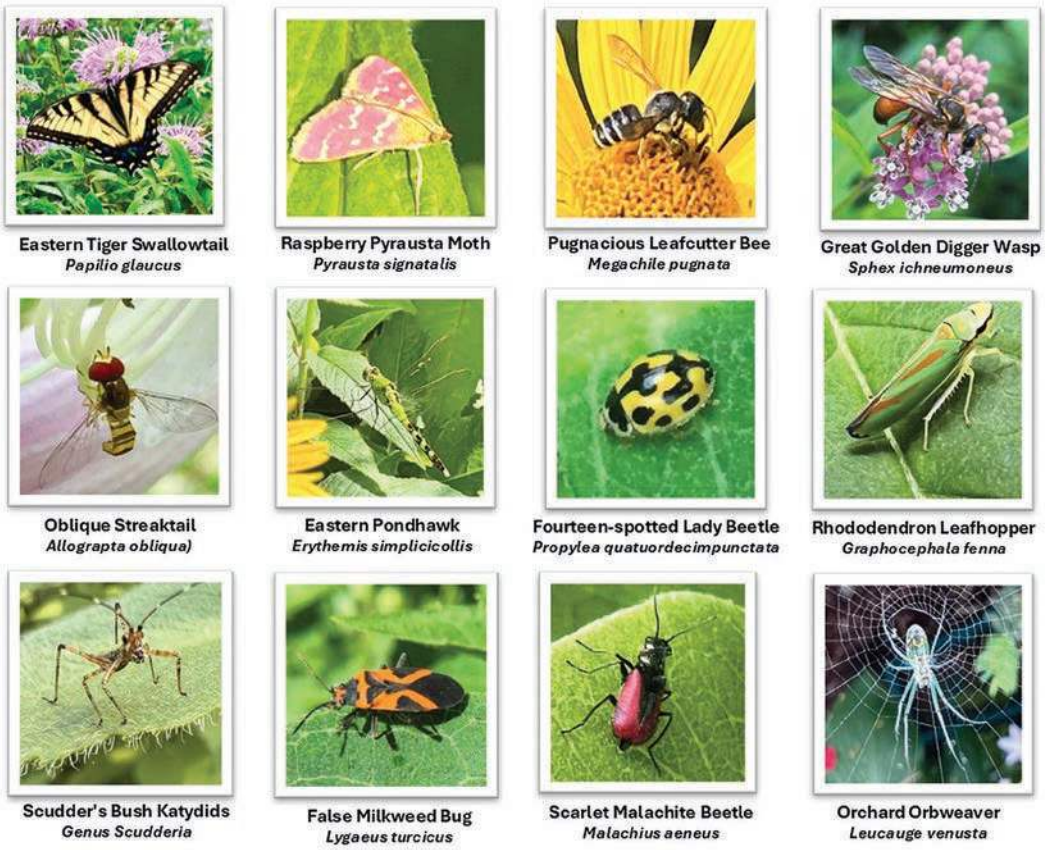
Monarch butterfly on purple coneflower

Of course, much like birding, you can search for bugs wherever you happen to be, particularly in locations abundant with native plants and flowers. While binoculars are perhaps the most common tool for birding, you probably already possess the handiest tool for bugging: your smartphone, which is likely equipped with a highly capable camera. You can utilize built-in zoom lenses for distant subjects and macro lenses for close-ups, which may kick in automatically as you zoom in or out. If your phone lacks these features, consider investing in inexpensive clip-on lenses. You can get good results from using the built-in camera app on your phone. And of course, an SLR camera with a macro lens could work too.


Binoculars for birding and smartphone camera for bugging

Good lighting, such as full sunlight, is ideal for photographing bugs, and you'll observe that sunny pollinator plants are significantly more active. Position yourself carefully to avoid casting a shadow, as this might startle the insect. While you can turn off the shutter sound, most insects don't seem to be bothered by it. Bees and wasps are often preoccupied with feeding and may ignore your close presence; however, always exercise caution.

Insects exhibit varied activity levels; some remain still, while others are skittish, elusive, or prone to hiding. Upon spotting an insect, take an initial photo immediately, even if from a distance, as you can always crop it later. If the insect remains, slowly move closer or zoom in, continually checking your focus and taking more pictures. Capture photos from multiple perspectives if you can — top, side, front, and back — and at different scales, including both close-ups and shots from farther away. Include a shot that shows the insect in its context, for instance, on its host plant. To indicate size, some people include a common object, such as a coin or a finger, in a shot, or use a small ruler. Achieving sharp focus can be challenging; use your phone's tap-to-focus feature on the insect. Take numerous photos, as at least some are likely to be well-focused and at a good angle; you can delete the extras later. For fast-moving insects, try using video or slow-motion video mode. You can subsequently capture still frames from the video with a screen grab. Some camera apps



Representative members of some of the "bug" families found at Henshaw Haven

offer a burst mode that takes a short video and selects the best frame. Use your phones's camera app to crop images and adjust brightness, contrast, and sharpness as needed. If location services are enabled, smartphones record the location of each photo in addition to the date and time, which is useful for submitting to identification apps such as iNaturalist[2].

As plants bloom throughout the season, different bugs come to visit, creating a sense of adventure as you anticipate what strange new creature will appear. Just as in the bird world, you will learn which bugs are common, allowing you to recognize and get excited about an unfamiliar one. Like birds, bugs exhibit a wide variety of shapes, sizes, colors, behaviors, preferred habitats, and seasonal appearance patterns. Similar to distinguishing bird families, you will learn to differentiate among butterflies, moths, bees, wasps, flies, beetles, leafhoppers, and many more.

When identifying birds, you observe shapes, wings, color patterns, movement, and the relative size of their parts. For insect identification, these physical characteristics are also paramount. Some insects are large, like mantises or luna moths, while others can be tiny, such as springtails or whirligig mites. Pay attention to body segments and the number of legs: insects have six legs, while spiders have eight. Note how many wings are present; bees possess four, whereas flies have only two. Examine the antennae: some are beaded or smooth, some have a knob at the end (butterflies), others are feathered (moths), and some are striped. The bug world also contains fascinating mimics, with flies disguising themselves as bees through yellow and black patterns or hairy bodies, spiders posing as ants, or Viceroy butterflies looking like monarchs.

Did you know that a lot of pollination is done at night by moths? There's another whole world of insect activity to explore that most people don't see except maybe around their porch light. I recently attended a special "Moth Ball" event in the evening, where lighted sheets were set up to attract moths and other nighttime fliers, and it was amazing to see how many insect visitors came to the party.

Part 2 of this article (coming in the next issue) will discuss in detail how to easily identify the bugs you have found and show you a few of my favorite ones. Meanwhile, try getting out with your camera on your own bugging adventure! ◆

A fly mimicking a bee and a spider mimicking an ant

References:

1. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Birding is Soaring in Popularity with Sky-High Impact, https://www.fws.gov/story/2024-12/birdwatching-america.

2. iNaturalist app, https://www.inaturalist.org/.

Ted Kuklinski

How I learned to Love Nature

By Linnea Dun Rappaport

Summit of Mt Monadnock. From Left to Right: Bahar Reinhardt, April Song (in back), Vivien Sheena, Nia Madias, Linnea Dun Rappaport

Some people grow up in nature, loving it from their first encounter. Others are not so comfortable with it and must be forced to encounter it first-hand. Take me, for example. I was signed up for the Environmental Science Camp of Newton under duress. I was **strongly** encouraged to sign up through a series of guilt trips, bribes, and empty promises. My mother thought this camp would be "good for me." I did not. Nonetheless, in part because there were no other options for a rising ninth grader in the summer of 2024, I acquiesced.

A week before camp started, I realized I was in for a unique form of hell. Hours on a bus (I get bus-sick) so that I could hike miles up mountains in the Berkshires (I am afraid of heights) to surround myself in nature (I am allergic to grass, pollen, and pretty much the entire outdoors). I worried I would be surrounded by tri-athletic, tree-hugging nerds who would look at me askance every time I misidentified a plant or flower. I desperately tried to weasel out, but to no avail; the security deposit was non-refundable, and my parents are *incredibly* frugal. There was no way out.

Alas, on the first day of camp, my stomach in knots, I biked the two miles to the daunting Environmental Science Camp's meeting spot at Bowen School. When I got there, the bright neon sign leered at me, mockingly: "Welcome to camp." I'd rather not. To my utter shock, I survived the first day. The only truly horrible part of the day was losing, magnificently at Gaga Ball, to a kid younger than me. But the rest of the day was great. The camp leader, Misha, had a similar sense of humor and began a month-long inside joke that made me feel like a true member of the camp family.

In the following days, on the bike ride there, I pedaled as fast as I could to be the first one to arrive. I wanted to spend all summer hanging out with my newfound friends. I loved all the activities we did together, whether it was the easier walks to parks around Newton, or the 12-hour-long days hiking mountains such as Mt. Wachusett, Mt. Monadnock, or trails like the Welch-Dickey Loop. I didn't even mind the long drives to get to these locations.

By the end of the month, I was already planning on signing up for the following summer, and I had discovered new passions: caring for the environment and being in nature — I now love hiking! I have taken my new passion for these things beyond Envi-Sci. I now lead the sustainability team at my high school and am a Youth Leader with Green Newton. I am even volunteering to lead an intergenerational walk at Edmands Park for Newton Conservators. Edmands Park has always held a special place in my heart. Growing up in Newtonville, I visited often, memorizing the trails while walking my dogs, sledding with friends, or going on Night Walks with Envi-Sci.

Why not join me on our Fall Walk at Edmands Park and discover nature's appeal for yourself? ◆

Linnea Dun Rappaport is a rising sophomore at Newton North High School. Linnea is passionate about climate justice and is Co-chair of the Student Green Team. She's a Youth Leader with Green Newton, a Co-Coordinator of the Service Learning Program at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Newton, and a member of the Newton Envi-Sci program. Linnea loves hiking and spending time with her spherical, opinionated cat, Melvin.

Invasives Update

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. Dig it up, cut it down, or pull off the seed pods and put into trash to prevent further spread. See our website ("Resources") for more information about BSW and other invasive species. ◆

☜ HELP WANTED ☞

We need involved volunteers to be a strong organization! Please help us fill these volunteer opportunities!

Ebulletin Coordinator: Mailchimp or similar experience preferred*

Social Media Coordinator: to post content to raise awareness of Conservators' activities and environmental issues*

Membership Coordinator: Little Green Light, Mailchimp, or similar experience preferred

Bookkeeper: accounting and/or Quicken or similar experience preferred**

Our other volunteer opportunities listed on our website — Biodiversity survey, Invasives, CR Monitoring, Outreach and Tabling, Walks assistant — are suitable for under age 18 as well as adults.

* age 18+ only

** age 18+ only; role involves a significant training period and a 2-year commitment is preferred

If you have any questions or would like to apply please contact us at volunteers@newtonconservators.org. Thank you!

Fifth Annual Newton Monarch Festival

Saturday, Sept. 13, 9-11:30 am (Rain date, Sept. 14)

Wellington Park, Kilburn Road, West Newton

Info and Registration:

https://newtonconservators.org/events/fifth-annual-newton-monarch-festival/

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 64 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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Thanks to the following contributors to this edition of the newsletter: Barbara Bates, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, Linnea Dun Rappaport, Max Rome, and Beth Wilkinson.

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

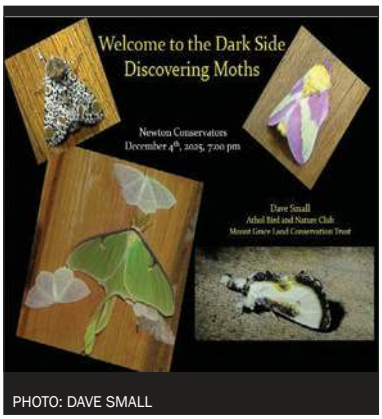

PHOTO: DAVE SMALL

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


PHOTO: BARBARA BATES

Looking for life in a vernal pool

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

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

FALL 2025 GUIDED WALKS & BIOBLITZ

www.newtonconservators.org

Walks are limited to 30 people now and people must register so leaders can contact them for weather updates or changes.

Saturday, Sept. 20, from 10-12 noon

The Many Facets of Cold Spring Park

Alan Nogee leads a walk

Tour Cold Spring Park, a woodland and wetland haven in the heart of Newton, and explore some of its natural wonders, mysteries, threats, and possibilities with Friends of Cold Spring Park founder and president Alan Nogee. See what makes a natural plant community invaluable for wildlife, climate mitigation, and climate resilience. Meet at the kiosk beyond the parking area at the far-left end of the Beacon Street entrance. *Rain date: Sept. 21, 10 am-12 noon.*

Trip Leader: Alan Nogee (617-821-1265) (friendsofcoldspringpark@gmail.com)

Sunday, Sept. 21, from 1-3 pm

Hammond Woods BioBlitz - Fall Pollinators and More!

Jon Regosin displays a vernal pool salamander

Come explore the pollinators of late summer and fall at Hammond Woods, Newton's largest conservation area and improve your insect and plant identification skills. Under the leadership of Jonathan Regosin, a director at Newton Conservators and Consulting Biologist for the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife, participants will learn how to use the iNaturalist app to document and identify species. Hammond Woods's habitats include noted rock outcroppings of Roxbury Puddingstone, brooks, ponds, wetlands, fields, and a historic woodland garden.

These BioBlitz events are part of a larger effort by Newton Conservators to document and raise awareness about the great diversity of plants and animals in Newton's open spaces. Previous iNaturalist observations for Hammond/Webster Woods are available @ https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/webster-woods-hammond-pond-newton-ma. Participants may go off-trail and should dress appropriately. Meet at the trailhead at Hammond Pond/The Street lot (https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/).

Trip Leader: Jonathan Regosin (jonathan.regosin@gmail.com)

Saturday, Oct. 4, from 10-12 noon

Nature in Your Pocket - An Intergenerational Walk at Edmands Park

Join Linnea Dunn Rappaport, rising sophomore at Newton North High School and member of the Newton Enviro-Sci Program, and Barbara Bates, retired Mass Audubon teacher/naturalist and a Newton Conservators' director, while they explore the variety of habitats in this woodland park. There is a meadow, wetland, upland forest, and an esker. Trails are generally wide and flat with a few steep, narrow, and stony portions. Registration is required to receive instructions regarding where to meet. *Rain date: Oct. 11, 10 am-12 noon.*

Trip Leaders: Linnea Dunn Rappaport and Barbara Bates (B.L.Bates@rcn.com)

Sunday, Oct. 5, from 10-12:30 pm

Up Close with Nature at Kennard Park #1

Jeff Adams with fern

Outdoor enthusiast and naturalist Jeff Adams will lead a guided nature walk at Kennard Park. Participants will learn how to identify a selection of native and non-native species by observing and touching (and sometimes smelling!) leaves, galls, branching patterns, and plant shapes. Jeff, who has led walks for the Friends of the [Middlesex] Fells, Sudbury Valley Trustees, and Lincoln Land Conservation Trust, will also discuss select natural history, folklore, and science. Sturdy shoes are recommended. Park topography is hilly and uneven. Meet at parking lot at 246 Dudley Road. Enrollment is limited to 15 people. *Rain date: Oct. 19, 10 am–12:30 pm.*

Trip Leader: Jeff Adams (781-866-8311) (jeffreyradams@verizon.net)

Saturday, Oct. 11, from 10-12:30 pm

Up Close with Nature at Kennard Park #2

Outdoor enthusiast and naturalist Jeff Adams will lead a guided nature walk at Kennard Park (this walk is mostly the same as the Kennard Park #1 walk). Participants will learn how to identify a selection of native and non-native species by observing and touching (and sometimes smelling!) leaves, galls, branching patterns, and plant shapes. Jeff, who has led walks for the Friends of the [Middlesex] Fells, Sudbury Valley Trustees, and Lincoln Land Conservation Trust, will also discuss some select natural

history, folklore and science. Sturdy shoes are recommended. Park topography is hilly and uneven. Meet at parking lot at 246 Dudley Road. Enrollment is limited to 15 people. *Rain date: Nov. 2, 10 am-12:30 pm.*

Trip Leader: Jeff Adams (781-866-8311) (jeffreyradams@verizon.net)

Sunday, Oct. 12, from 8 - 10:30 am

Fall Bird Walk with Haynes Miller

Haynes Miller (middle) in 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 fall migrants as well as resident species. This walk is timed at the peak of the fall sparrow migration. Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome. Walking shoes are recommended. Co-sponsored by Friends of Nahanton Park and Newton Conservators. Meet at the lot accessed from the Winchester Street entrance to the park. Cancelled if steady rain. If concerned about the weather, please call.

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

Saturday, Oct. 25, from 10 - 12 noon

Fall Ramble in Webster Woods

Barbara Bates shares a finding in the woods

Join Barbara Bates, Newton Conservators' director and retired Mass Audubon teacher/naturalist, for an easy fall foliage ramble. Learn about the varied habitats of Webster Woods, which include upland woods, a granite/puddingstone dome, vernal pool, marsh, and wetlands stream, and each habitat's natural history. Trails: frequent rocks and roots; mostly flat or gradual rises with a few steep portions. Registration is required to receive instructions regarding where to meet. *Rain date: Nov. 1, 10 am–12 noon.*

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

Sunday, Oct. 26, from 2 - 4:30 pm

Hike Newton's Aqueducts

Sudbury Aqueduct

Join Henry Finch, a Newton Conservators' director and avid hiker, on a four-mile trek 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 Starbucks in Waban Square. The walk will be cancelled in the event of steady rain.

Trip Leader: Henry Finch (henryjfinch@gmail.com)

Mills Falls borders another stunning walk in Hemlock Gorge Reservation in Newton.

NEWTON CONSERVATORS

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Count me in! I want to help Newton Conservators preserve open spaces and connect people to nature in Newton. Please renew/accept my tax-deductible membership at the level checked below:

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NEWTON CONSERVATORS

NEWSLETTER

Preserving open space and connecting people to nature since 1961

FALL ISSUE

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IN THE FALL ISSUE:

Warbling Vireo & Eastern Kingbird
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.