

## **NEWTON CONSERVATORS SPRING WALKS/ACTIVITIES SERIES 2010**

Please note that some of the walks/activities meet at different times. Some are weather dependent; please call trip leader if in doubt. For Google Maps directions to walk locations, and for other links, visit our website:

<http://www.newtonconservators.org/walks.htm>

**Sunday, April 25, 2010**

**10am**

### **“Newton Serves” Garlic Mustard Pull at Cold Spring Park**

Garlic mustard, a native of Europe that probably came here as a garden herb, has now invaded our backyards, parks, forests, and conservation areas. It is high up on the federal/state official list of plant invaders threatening our environment. It will quickly cover vast areas, and low light forested areas, shading out other plants, chemically altering the soil to inhibit germination of competitor seeds, and altering the habitat for native insects such as butterflies. But in areas where it is just starting to invade, it only takes a small amount of effort to be rid of it. It is a biennial very easily identified and pulled when the second year plants are flowering in May/June. If not pulled, each plant will scatter hundreds to thousands of seeds later in the season that will become first year plants the next year, and also remain as viable seeds for several more years. It is easy and fun to get it out! Cold Spring Park is one area becoming infested. We will spend a couple hours pulling along the Cochituate aqueduct walk, staying in upland areas away from wetlands. In case of poison ivy wear long pants and garden gloves. Biodegradable trash bags will be provided; the plants must be disposed of as trash, not as yard waste.

Meet at the Duncklee Street entrance, at the Newton Highlands side of the park.  
Trip leader is Katherine Howard (617-527-1796).

**Sunday, April 25, 2010**

**10am**

### **“Newton Serves” Japanese Knotweed Pull at Flowed Meadow**

Japanese Knotweed is a bamboo-like invader from Asia that can create dense 8' tall single-species stands. This stand, located just behind the ball field at the Auburndale Playground, is spreading into the understory of the Flowed Meadow Conservation Area. Knotweed is a tough adversary, not because it's spiny or strong or even particularly hard to pull. But like the magic brooms in Disney's "Fantasia" Sorcerer's Apprentice, any small root fragments we leave behind will spring back to life the following year. Government scientists are seeking biological control agents for this species in Asia but until and unless they find some, we are stuck controlling the plant by hand. Persistence pays with this species, and eradication is possible, but it takes several years to truly finish the job. Here is a chance to get in on the first year of work at a new Knotweed location. **WHAT TO BRING:** Pitchforks, garden spades, and hand pruners, if you have them.

Meet at Auburndale Playground ("The Cove") parking lot on West Pine Street.  
Trip leader is Jane Sender (617-462-8425)

**Saturday, May 8, 2010**

**2pm**

### **Exploring Vernal Pools at Webster Woods**

Vernal pools are small ponds that lack fish and provide important breeding habitat for many amphibians. They support a great diversity of insects and other invertebrates. We will visit at least two vernal pools, dipnet for invertebrates, and discuss vernal pool ecology.

We will meet at the end of Warren Street, where there is parking for 5-8 cars. Additional street parking is available. Warren Street intersects with Langley Road near Newton Centre. If you have calf boots or a dipnet feel free to bring these, but no special gear is needed. This walk will be led by Jon Regosin, Newton Resident, and biologist with the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program of the MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. For questions, contact Jon at 617-244-0736 or [berkowitz.regosin@verizon.net](mailto:berkowitz.regosin@verizon.net)

**Sunday, May 9, 2010**

**8am**

**Nahanton Park Mother's Day Bird Walk**

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 both migratory and resident songbirds. Likely finds include; brightly colored warblers, vireos, and orioles. Also expect bluebirds, scarlet tanagers, swallows, and brown thrashers.

Enter the park at the Nahanton Street entrance next to the river. Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome. Boots are recommended. Walk will be cancelled in steady rain. Trip leader is Alison Leary (617-821-5619)

**Sunday, May 9, 2010**

**10am**

**Garlic Mustard Pull at Cold Spring Park**

(See above description of garlic mustard.) This will follow up our April pull. In case of poison ivy wear long pants and garden gloves. Biodegradable trash bags will be provided; the plants must be disposed of as trash, not as yard waste.

Meet at the Duncklee Rd. entrance, at the Newton Highlands side of the park. Trip leader is Katherine Howard (617-527-1796).

**Sunday, May 16, 2010**

**8am**

**Flowed Meadow Bird Walk**

We will walk along the river and through Flowed Meadow and are likely to see many migrating and breeding songbirds. We may possibly see the pair of Bald Eagles which spent the winter in this area, as well as all sorts of ducks, mergansers and grebes in Purgatory Cove and on the river. Bring binoculars if you have them and boots for wet ground. All levels of birding experience welcome.

Meet at Auburndale Playground ("The Cove") parking lot on W. Pine Street. Trip leader is Jane Sender (617-462-8425).

**Sunday, May 16, 2010**

**10am**

**Garlic Mustard Pull at Saw Mill Park**

(See above description of garlic mustard).

Meet at the parking lot on Vine Street.

Trip leader is Katherine Howard (617-527-1796)

**Sunday, May 23, 2010**

**1pm (note afternoon starting time)**

**Garlic Mustard Pull at Dolan Pond**

See above description of garlic mustard. This is an exciting year for garlic mustard pulling at Dolan because plant pull crews have been very active in the last two years eradicating nearly every flowering stem before they had a chance to set seed. We are close to eradicating this soil-damaging invasive from this gem of a pocket park. Crews also removed nearly every knotweed stem, and although knotweed removal takes years to complete, each time it gets easier. We will mix in some general nature study so bring binoculars and hand lenses for observing birds, bugs, flowers, and a good variety of pond life.

Meet at Dolan Pond conservation area in W. Newton. Street parking is available near the four entrances at Auburndale Avenue, Webster Park, Stratford and Cumberland.

Trip leader is Eric Olson (617-872-9928)

**Sunday, May 23, 2010**

**2pm**

**Webster Woods Walk**

Join us for a leisurely walk through the largest conservation area in Newton. Explore miles of trails through second growth woods with noted rock outcroppings of Roxbury Puddingstone, brooks, ponds, wetlands, overgrown farmland, and an historic woodland garden. Trip highlights include: Webster Brook and Webster vale-one of the few brooks that go to the Charles where the headwaters can be seen; a great area for marsh marigolds and salamanders, Gooch's Caves- a large rock formation with numerous small caves (climbing in and through the caves is optional), and Bare Pond, one of the few remaining vernal pools in Newton.

We will meet at the end of Warren Street, where there is parking for 5-8 cars. Additional street parking is available.

Trip leader is Octo Burnett (617-969-6988)

**Sunday, May 30, 2010**

**10am**

**Japanese Knotweed Pull at Flowed Meadow**

See above description of Japanese knotweed. This is a follow-up to our April invasive pull at this location. WHAT TO BRING: Pitchforks, garden spades, and hand pruners, if you have them.

Meet at Auburndale Playground ("The Cove") parking lot on West Pine Street.

Trip leader is Jane Sender (617-462-8425)

**Saturday, June 5, 2010**

**12:00 to 2:30pm**

**Fern Walk at Flowed Meadow**

Flowed Meadow is a relatively wild area north of Auburndale Park. We will see about ten ferns and a club-moss. There will be no real climbing involved, but we may go off-trail. Insects may be a nuisance. The Newton Land Management Committee has been systematically surveying the city's open spaces to

document the existing biodiversity. In terms of ferns and related plants (pteridophytes) we have found 28 species and hybrids. Some occur infrequently and are difficult to get to, and some are very subtle to distinguish. We will provide an introduction to some that are quite common and easily recognized with a little practice.

Meet at the Auburndale Playground (“The Cove”) parking lot on West Pine Street.

Trip leader is Don Lubin (617-254-8464)

### **Sunday, June 6, 2010**

**10am**

#### **Blue Heron Bridge Floodplain, Forest, and River Bank Invasives and Ecology**

See above descriptions of invasives. Trip leader Eric Olson (617-872-9928) reports: “This is the third year working along the Charles River Greenway at this bridge site, helping the Trustees of the Reservations with their stewardship of the floodplain forest. We will be working again on garlic mustard and knotweed, but there are other goals here too that require maintenance of a wildflower meadow. You will see natives like skunk cabbage, may apple, jewelweed, and several species of fern, plus there are numerous riverside birds and of course the beautiful bridge itself. We will again mix in some general nature study so bring binoculars and an insect net and hand lens if you have them.”

Park at the Pleasant Street Super Stop N Shop parking lot in Watertown (near Russo’s) at the corner furthest from the store. This spot is directly in front of you as you enter the parking lot from Pleasant Street. There is a path entrance there. Turn left and follow path to the bridge. If lost or confused, call for clarification once you are in range.

### **Sunday, June 6, 2010**

**2pm**

#### **Charles River Canoe Trip**

Join us for an afternoon paddling along the Charles River, leisurely enjoying the wildlife and river views.

Meet at the Charles River Canoe & Kayak ([www.paddleboston/newton.com](http://www.paddleboston/newton.com)) rental dock at 2401

Commonwealth Avenue (Rt. 30) near the Newton Marriott Hotel. There is a parking lot (off Norumbega Road) across the river from the rental dock where you can park your car, and then walk back across the bridge. If you have your own canoe or kayak you can put it in the water from this parking lot. Dress appropriately. A hat, sunscreen, drinks and snacks are recommended. Thunderstorms will cancel the trip.

Trip leader is Bill Hagar (617-964-2644)

### **Sunday, June 13, 2010**

**8am**

#### **Cutler Park Bird Walk**

This walk will do a loop around the pond near Kendrick Street, and go south a mile or so. This area is a large expanse of woods, wetlands and marsh. Expect to see common woodland birds, some warblers, and the willow flycatchers along the river. Meet at parking lot off Kendrick Street on Needham line just over the bridge. Dress appropriately. Boots are recommended as the area can be wet and marshy. Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome.

Trip leader is Pete Gilmore (617-969-1513)