



Newton Conservators E-Bulletin

Wednesday, April 22, 2009
... working to preserve open space in Newton since 1961

Happy Earth Day!

Today is Earth Day and what a glorious day it is! The maples have suddenly greened up with their flowers, the forsythias have been blooming along with the cheerful daffodils and even the first dandelions are harbingers of the greening of Newton that is upon us over the next several weeks.

The Spring Issue of the Newton Conservators newsletter is out (and mailed) and is also available online at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/apr09.pdf>. Articles in this edition include: *Environmental Award Goes to Crystal Lake Conservancy*, *The Newton Almanac*, *Lower Falls Bridge Update*, *Eurasian Teal at Cold Spring Park*, *A Quiet Place to Walk in All Seasons (Newton Cemetery)*, *Gardening Notes for Spring*, *Backyard Birding*, *Spring Lecture: Tree Pests and Tree Health*, and *It's War - On Plant Invaders*.

Our Newton Conservators Spring Walks/Activities Series is now online as well at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/walks.htm> and a printable list of the series can be found at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/events/walkspring09.pdf>. It will also be included in our May Events Calendar coming in the next issue of the e-Bulletin. Check out the plethora of activities still to be had this month of April below.

April - Early May Event Calendar

Here is a collection of some upcoming events for April and early May that may be of interest to our readers. We will be putting out the extensive May Event listing shortly as well (there is a space limitation in these emailings) which will include all events from the Newton Conservators Spring Walks/Activities Series. Visit our Walks page at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/trips.htm>. Please send any event listings to dolanpond@aol.com.

Thursday, April 23, 7 pm
Mayoral Candidates Transportation Forum
Newton City Hall - War Memorial Auditorium

Bike Newton is sponsoring a Mayoral candidates Transportation Forum / Debate on transportation issues in Newton on April 23. Some of Bike Newton's issues are: reducing the number of cars on our streets, enhancing access to public transit, and, of course, dramatically improving bicycle accommodations and amenities. All four candidates have agreed to attend. This event will take place in the War Memorial Auditorium at City Hall. The format is as follows. The first hour will consist of questions asked by Jenn Adams from New TV. The second hour will involve questions from the audience. During the first hour, there will be 5 questions, all directly based on the Comprehensive Plan transportation section. The candidates are unaware of the questions, but understand that they will relate to the Comprehensive Plan. Each candidate will have 2 minutes to answer a question and then 1 minute to rebut comments from other candidates or to clarify a point. During the second hour, questions from the audience will be collected, screened for clarity, and then members of the public will be called upon to ask their questions personally. Although this is a "transportation forum," there will likely be discussion of broader planning issues and the candidates will probably share their views on development, zoning, and an overall vision for the future of the built environment of our city. This forum will be the first opportunity during this election year for the public to see all four candidates together and to be able to address them and ask them questions. www.bikenewton.org or call Lois Levin at 617-527-1237 for more info.

Saturday, April 25, 9 am – Noon
10th Annual Charles River Cleanup

Come join more than 2,200 other volunteers along all 80 miles of the Charles River in the 10th Annual Cleanup on Saturday, April 25! You will be part of a group picking up trash (including shopping carts, plastic bottles, and old tires) from along the banks of the Charles River at one of 40 sites from Boston to Bellingham. CRWA will provide participants with gloves, trash bags, and a free t-shirt for, and you will have the satisfaction of knowing you've helped improve the health and beauty of the Charles River! For more information, visit www.charlesriver.org/cleanup or call [781-788-0007](tel:781-788-0007) x303. Alison Leary (Newton Conservators board member and walks coordinator) is organizing one of the local sites at the Dealtry Pool (just over the river on the Watertown side upriver from the Watertown dam). Contact her today (ali_baba62@hotmail.com) if you would like to join that team so they can plan on the number of t-shirts etc. The Watertown police usually do a BBQ after the work effort.

Saturday, April 25, 9:30 am
Annual Spring Cleanup of Hemlock Gorge

Volunteers should meet at Hamilton Place between 9:30 and 10 a.m. Parking available at the Mills Falls parking lot. Spruce-up materials supplied and Refreshments provided for all volunteers! Please dress appropriately for the work and weather (rain or shine). More info can be found at <http://www.hemlockgorge.org/>

Sunday, April 26 - 8:30 am - 4:15 pm
NewtonSERVES Volunteer Day

NewtonSERVES is Newton's volunteer extravaganza involving over 50 volunteer projects throughout Newton. It comes at the end of school vacation week this year on Sunday, April 26. Check out <http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/newtonservices/default.html> for more information on projects and how to signup. Project include cleanups at Auburndale Cove, Carleton Park, Chaffin Park, Cheesecake Brook, Cold Spring Park, Edmands Park, our three

historic Burying Grounds, Lower Falls - Hamilton, Newton Angino Community Farm, Quinobequin Trails, Richardson Field, Waban Avenue Aqueduct, Weeks Field, and many others. Newton City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Avenue, is headquarters for NewtonSERVES: Here is the day's schedule:

8:30 - 9:15AM - Registration and Team Check-in for all-day &/or morning projects. Pick up your free coffee, breakfast munchies, T-shirts and goodies provided by sponsors. Project leaders &/or Liaisons can come as early as 8:15am if they have to.

9:00AM - 5 minutes - "Opening Ceremonies" in the War Memorial Auditorium
Volunteers, participating in all-day or half-day projects, then go to assigned Project Sites to "Make a Difference".

9:30AM until 12 or 12:30 - for morning projects

9:30AM until about 3:30PM - for ALL DAY projects

12:00-12:30PM - Registration and Team Check-in for AFTERNOON projects. Pick up free T-shirts and goodies from our sponsors. Volunteers, participating in afternoon projects, then go to assigned Project Sites to "Make a Difference".

12:30 until 3:30PM - for afternoon projects

3:30PM - 4:15PM - Return to Newton City Hall War Memorial Auditorium for our brief Closing Celebration and free "ICE CREAM SUNDAES ON SUNDAY"

Sunday, April 26, 11AM-2PM

Friends of Hall's Pond: Community Work Day

The 33rd annual Hall's Pond Community Work Day will be held on April 26 as part of Celebrate *OUR* Earth. Volunteers are needed to join the Friends of Hall's Pond in the removal of trash and planting trees. Gloves, tools and refreshments provided. No experience necessary. Hall's Pond Sanctuary is located behind Amory Park, Amory St., Brookline. Event sponsored by the Friends of Hall's Pond and the Brookline Conservation Commission. For more information, email: friendsofhallspnd@gmail.com or call 617-731-6919.

Sunday, April 26, all day,

Run of the Charles Canoe and Kayak Race - Dedham to Allston

Paddle, volunteer, cheer on the racers, or join the celebration at the Finish Line Festival at Artisan Park in Brighton. For more information or to participate, contact Meg or Sally at 508-698-6810, rotc@crwa.org, or visit the [race website](#). Thanks to Boston Duck Tours for supporting this year's race. **Eco Boat Trips at Finish Line Festival** - 1pm & 2pm, Artisan Park, Allston/Brighton This family-friendly activity will include water testing experiments and games with REI. The boat departs from the dock at Artisan/Herter Park in Brighton at 1pm and 2pm.

Monday, April 27, 7 pm

Organic Gardening 101: Sustainable Practices

Ted Chapman, Risa Edelstein and Henrietta Light

Newton Free Library, Druker Auditorium

A panel of three professional landscapers will speak on organic gardening practices, providing step-by-step information for the home gardener, focusing on healthy soil preparation, sustainable water usage, and pest management. Healthy, living soil is the starting place for

organic gardening.

Learn from Ted Chapman what healthy, living soil means, and how to create the soil conditions that foster healthy plants that we enjoy, in turn nurture us, and make the environment healthier. Ted is a certified landscape designer and organic land care professional. Ted has gardened organically for 35 years; his gardens have been featured on the Green Decade's organic garden and Newton garden tours and his home on the annual solar home tour. Risa Edelstein will consider how water can be harvested and used in a sustainable landscape. Discover ways to conserve water and use smart irrigation methods. Learn what you can do about storm water and why you should care. Understand rain gardens and the role they can play in your yard. Risa is a landscape designer that trained at the Landscape Institute of the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. She is a certified Massachusetts Arborist and accredited with NOFA as an organic land care professional. She uses organic landscape standards and practices and is interested in helping people understand how easy it is to create sustainable and eco-friendly yards. Henrietta Light will speak on pest management in the home garden using organic methods. Learn how to manage pests through companion planting, attracting beneficial insects, weed control, and utilizing compost to create healthy soil. Henrietta has been a horticulturist at the Lyman Estate in Waltham and is now a garden consultant and designer. She is a founding member of CURE (Chemical Use Reduction and Education) a task force of the Watertown Citizen's for Environmental Safety.

Saturday, May 2, 2 pm

Nahanton Park and Newton Angino Community Farm: What was here before? (NC-SWAS)

This event kicks off the Newton Conservators Walk Spring Walks/Activities Series (other events in this series will be designated with NC-SWAS). This area has always been "open space", and it has had diverse uses before becoming today's City Park, private community center, and city owned farm. We start at Nahanton Park, where we will find the foundation of the city poor farm and look at old photos and maps. Then we walk through the hemlock grove (a conservation restriction area) to the Working Boys' Home, where we'll hear an account of a homeless boy who grew up there in the 1940s. Next we go to the site of a 1950s antiaircraft artillery gun and find out about its cold war function. At Angino Farm, we'll see new crops, beehives, and an experimental orchard and hear about the farm's operations. Tour is a one mile loop, for up to 15 people. To reserve a place and get meeting location, email tours@newtoncommunityfarm.org. Trip Leader is Lucy Caldwell-Stair (stair@comcast.net, 617-028-3375)

Saturday May 9, 10 am-Noon

Knotweed Pull at Hammond Pond (NC-SWAS)

Knotweed pull with Brandeis ecologist Eric Olson. Eric reports: "The kids in Newton's Environmental Science Program did a fantastic job helping me take on this new site last summer, pulling up 8' tall stems and their root masses. This year we will deal with the scores of small shoots that will be sprouting from the root pieces left in the soil last year. I also need help planting in shade-tolerant native plants to hold the soil. This is a well-drained shady site, so we'll try the common wood aster, *Aster divaricatus* and blue-stemmed goldenrod, *Solidago caesia*, that I have raised from seed obtained on the Brandeis campus. We will also find time for some general botanizing and shoreline exploring along the Pond." Meet at the small parking lot at the southwest corner of Hammond Pond between General

Cinemas and the Hammond Pond Parkway. Leader is Eric Olson (617-872-9928).

Sunday, May 10, 7:30 am
Mother's Day Bird Walk at Nahanton Park (NC-SWAS)

Nahanton Park offers a mix of woodlands, wetlands and meadows along the Charles River, making it a good place to observe a variety of migratory songbirds, as well as resident species. Last year's highlights included a flock of bobolinks, a pair of eastern bluebirds, an orchard oriole, rose-breasted grosbeaks, vireos, warblers and brown thrashers. Enter the park at the Nahanton street entrance next to the river. Parking is available inside the park. Bring binoculars if you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome. The walk is weather dependent. Trip Leaders are experienced birders Molly Edmonds and Haynes Miller (617-599-4541)

Newton Notes

April's Environmental Show on NewTV

The April Environmental Show is a reprise of our 2005 show "Flora and Fauna of the Charles River". This program celebrates the Charles River with a virtual walk along the one-mile stretch of the river from Watertown Square to Bridge Street. Photographer and naturalist Carole Smith Berney presents a colorful and entertaining look at the river and pathway, featuring the wildflowers, birds, herons, ducks, turtles, and furry creatures found there. See the riverscape along with the people who walk, run, skate, bike, fish, and birdwatch along the path. One portion of the show focuses on the efforts of Massachusetts DCR planner Dan Driscoll, with before and after shots of the Charles River Pathway.

Berney is a Watertown naturalist, wildlife photographer, and nature educator. Inspired by her many walks on the Charles River Path in Watertown and Newton, she has documented life along the river in all seasons and weather over several years. Her "portraits" of animals help to enhance the community's appreciation of the biodiversity and natural beauty found close to urban settings. She exhibits her work locally and presents slideshows for libraries, community groups, assisted-living facilities, senior centers, and schools.

The Environmental Show is broadcast on the NewTV Blue channel (Comcast Chan. 10, RCN Chan. 15, Verizon Chan. 34): Mondays at 3 pm, Tuesdays at 1:30 am and 11:30 pm, Wednesdays at 11:30 am, Thursdays at Noon, 4 pm, and 7:30 pm, and Saturdays at 10 am. Videos of previous Environmental Show programs are available for viewing online at <http://greendecade.org/environmentTV.htmlDecade>. This episode can be found online at the Newton Conservators video website at <http://newtonconservators.blip.tv/#1529337>. This monthly show is produced alternatively by the Green Decade and the Newton Conservators.

Newton Lower Falls Rail Bridge

The Newton Conservators have cosponsored a CPA proposal in conjunction with the

restoration of a rail bridge in Newton Lower Falls. Check out the Conservators web page at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/railroadbridge.htm> for details on this project. At a recent public session on the project, Ald. Amy Sangiolo provided a link to a new site for the Charles River Neighborhood Foundation at www.charlesriverneighborhoodfoundation.org which has some information from a 1975 study commissioned by the Newton Conservation Commission which shows a series of river pathways.

There was a lot of discussion at the session related to the question of living along a bike path. Check out the Newton Conservators Environmental Short (4 min) at www.newtonconservators.blip.tv/#1977256 where we interview some homeowners whose property abuts the busy Charles River Pathway in Watertown about their experiences living next to the pathway.

Newton Birding Blog

The next few weeks are perhaps the most exciting to birders as our avian summer residents return and migrants pass through on their way north. Already, palm and pine warblers have been reported in Newton this spring. Scott Roland, an amateur birder in Newton, has started a new Newton Birding Blog whose URL is <http://newtonbirding.blogspot.com/>. It's intended as a blog for Newton birders to ask questions and share local sightings. Scott is looking for as many authors to this blog as possible. If you are interested in posting your local bird sightings please make a note of this as a comment on one of Scott's postings. You could post recent sightings (with date, time, and location - no bird is too ordinary), or pictures of local birds. You could ask about a bird that you are trying to identify, share a favorite birding spot, or post community events of interest to Newton birders. Check it out. Also of interest may be Jon Regosin's Natural Newton blog at <http://naturalnewton.blogspot.com> where you can see some nice turtle pictures. By the way, the Eurasian green-winged teal continues its stay at Cold Spring Park along the trail from the end of the Beacon Street Parking lot.

Whole Foods Markets Supports Green Decade Coalition in April

During April, customers who shop at Whole Foods Markets locations in Newton, **647 Washington Street-Newtonville, 916 Walnut St- Newton Four Corners**, can contribute to Green Decade/Newton by purchasing \$2 and \$5 donation coupons at the check-out. Green Decade promotes increased energy efficiency, improved recycling and waste management, natural resource conservation and sustainable gardening to help households, businesses and the City of Newton reduce their environmental impact. Contributions will help Green Decade continue programs including the Newton Schools Art & Essay Contest, Environmental Speaker Series, New-TV's Environment show, the TAB's Environment page, and Green Homes and Garden Tours. Residents are also invited to join a city-wide effort to reduce home energy usage by joining an EcoTeam.

E-Bulletin Notes

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at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/>. Event listings for our e-Bulletin can be sent to dolanpond@aol.com. This e-Bulletin is a service of the Newton Conservators, Newton's open space advocates since 1961. Membership information can be found online at our website - <http://www.newtonconservators.org/membership.htm>. You can join the organization or even renew your membership online now! - *E-Bulletin Editor Ted Kuklinski, Newton Conservators*

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