

Dear Invasive Plant Task Force,

Our co-coordinating of outings and conservation land stewardship with the Newton Conservators continues, and news of our work will now also be spread by the Green Decade / Newton. Efforts to heal and to enjoy Newton's open spaces continue to attract new partners.

When it comes to invasive plant control though, you all continue to be the core of our efforts, we truly cannot do it without you. Many hands make the work just flow, and its so satisfying to watch our progress. Please review the following schedule of events, here mixed in with just-for-fun outings as well. I start with a listing of what / where / when, for those of you in-the-know about rendezvous points and the to-do list for each species this will suffice. Details are below and also attached in an easily printed-and-posted-on-fridge format.

That last sloppy flurry of snow has no chance against the Sun's steepening angle, and birdsong tells us that spring truly is here. Not only the birds know: I spotted hundreds of *Eubbranchipus vernalis* swimming in a vernal pool this week, need I say more? (See http://www.vernalpool.org/inf_fs.htm) The pace of nature will quicken now, so hang on. Let's enjoy and care for what we have.

See you in the woods,

Dr. Eric Olson

NEWTON CONSERVATORS EVENTS: Spring 2011
With support from the Newton Invasive Plant Task Force

- Saturday April 16th 9 am Bird Walk along Charles River with Waltham Land Trust
- Saturday May 7th 10 am – 12 noon Garlic Mustard pull at Cold Spring Park
- Sunday May 8th 8 am Nahanton Park Mother's Day Bird Walk
- Sunday May 15th 10 am – 12 noon Garlic Mustard Pull at Dolan Pond. A NewtonServes Project.
- Sunday May 15th 10 am – 12 noon Garlic Mustard Pull at Saw Mill Brook Park. NewtonServes Project.
- Sunday May 15th 10 am – 12 noon Garlic Mustard Pull at Blue Heron Bridge. A NewtonServes Project.
- Saturday May 21st 10 am – 12 noon Follow up Garlic Mustard Pulls Blue Heron Bridge
- Saturday May 21st 8 am Birding and Boating Trip at Nahanton Park Rain Date Sunday May 22nd
- Sunday June 5th 10 am – 12 noon Japanese Knotweed Pull at Hammond Pond
- Sunday June 5th 2 pm Canoe/kayak trip at Nahanton Park with Bill Hagar (2 pm)
- Sunday June 12th 2 pm Newton Aqueducts Hike (2 pm)

Newton Conservators Spring Walks/Activities 2011

Saturday April 16th 9 am Bird Walk along Charles River with Waltham Land Trust

Join us for a spring walk bird walk on the upriver trails of the

Charles between Waltham and Auburndale. We'll be looking for early spring migrants, lingering winter ducks, and our resident species. This event is Co-sponsored with the Waltham Land Trust. Meet at the Watch Factory Parking Lot on Curve Street at 9:00am. Trip Leaders: Alison Leary Mooradian and Ted Kuklinski (617-821-5619)

Saturday May 7th 10 am – 12 noon Garlic Mustard pull at Cold Spring Park

Garlic Mustard, a non-native high on federal/state Plant Invaders list, is taking hold in our backyards, parks, forests and conservation areas. It quickly covers low light forested areas, shading out other plants, chemically altering the soil to inhibit growth of competitor plants, and altering the habitat for native insects such as butterflies. But where it is just starting to invade, it is easy to be rid of it. It is a biennial 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! We will pull along the Cochituate aqueduct walk. Wear long pants and garden gloves. 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: Katherine Howard (617-527-1796).

Sunday May 8th 8 am 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. Parking is available inside the park. Bring binoculars if

you have them. Beginners as well as experienced birders are welcome. Boots are recommended. Walk will be cancelled in steady rain. Co-sponsored with Friends of Nahanton Park.
Trip Leader: Alison Leary (617-821-5619)

Sunday May 15th 10 am – 12 noon Garlic Mustard Pull at Dolan Pond. A NewtonServes Project.

This is an exciting year for garlic mustard pulling at Dolan because plant pull crews have been very active in the last three 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 many knotweed stems, 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: Eric Olson (617-89928)

Sunday May 15th 10 am – 12 noon Garlic Mustard Pull at Saw Mill Brook Park. A NewtonServes Project.

See above description of garlic mustard. Wear long pants and garden gloves. Meet at parking lot on Vine Street.

Trip Leader: Katherine Howard (617-527-1796)

Sunday May 15th 10 am – 12 noon Garlic Mustard Pull at Blue Heron Bridge. A NewtonServes Project.

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 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 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.

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

Saturday May 21st 10 am – 12 noon Follow up Garlic Mustard Pulls (Blue Heron Bridge and/or other locations TBD).

See above description of Blue Heron Bridge and parking instructions. Check with leaders; locations near the Bridge will be chosen depending on where the need is greatest. We may be several hundred yards away from the Bridge so do not hesitate to call the phone numbers provided, if you arrive a bit late.

Trip leaders: Eric Olson (617-872-9928) and Katherine Howard (617-527-1796)

Saturday May 21st 8 am Birding and Boating Trip at Nahanton Park Rain Date Sunday May 22nd

Join us for a leisurely canoe/kayak trip investigating bird life along the banks of the Charles River from Charles River Canoe & Kayak's newest location in Nahanton Park. This is a lovely 15-mile stretch of the Charles, where Paddlers can enjoy 13 miles of calm water from upstream of Dedham Ave in Needham to Silk Mill Dam at Newton Upper Falls. Almost all the shoreline is forest or marsh, and much of it is protected parkland. We can expect to see shorebirds like spotted sandpipers, great blue herons, common egrets, and several species of warblers, as well as raptors like red tailed and red shouldered hawks. If you have your own canoe or kayak you can put it in the water from this parking lot. Dress appropriately. A hat, sunscreen, snacks and drinks are recommended to bring along. *Newton Conservator members get a 10% discount on canoe & kayak rentals.* Meet at the Nahanton Street entrance next to the river. Parking is available inside the park. Co-Sponsored with Friends of Nahanton Park.

Trip Leader: Pete Gilmore (617-969-1513) Note: rain date is Sunday May 22.

Sunday June 5th 10 am – 12 noon Japanese Knotweed Pull at Hammond Pond

Japanese Knotweed is a bamboo-like invader from Asia that can create dense 8' tall single-species stands. 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. Bring pitchforks, garden spades, and hand pruners, if you have them. Meet at small parking lot off Hammond Pond Parkway adjacent to pond and within view of Macys.

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

Sunday June 5th 2 pm Canoe/kayak trip at Nahanton Park with Bill Hagar (2 pm)

Join us for a canoe trip from Charles River Canoe & Kayak's newest location in Nahanton Park, is on a 15-mile stretch of the Charles. Paddlers can enjoy 13 miles of calm water from upstream of Dedham Ave in Needham to Silk Mill Dam at Newton Upper Falls. (See above description of "Birding and Boating" Trip). If you have your own canoe or kayak you can put it in the water from this parking lot. Dress appropriately. A hat, sunscreen, snacks and drinks are recommended to bring along. Thunderstorms will cancel the trip. *Newton Conservator members get a 10% discount on canoe & kayak rentals.* Meet at the Nahanton Street entrance next to the river. Parking is available inside the park. Co-sponsored with friends of Nahanton Park

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

Sunday June 12th 2 pm Newton Aqueducts Hike (2 pm)

This is a very popular 4-6 mile hike through woods, meadows and fields along the Newton sections of the [Sudbury and Cochituate aqueducts](#). Parts of the paths traverse close to backyards, so hikers do need to be respectful of private property. 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 coffee shop](#) near the Waban MBTA station.

Trip leader: Henry Finch