



**Friends of Nahanton Park, Inc.**

November 2023

Dear Friends and Neighbors of Nahanton Park,

As the leaves change color and the days shorten, it's renewal time again for the Friends of Nahanton Park and we want to thank you for your continued support of this wonderful open space gem in Newton. We hope that you have had to opportunity to visit the park lately and will be able to do so again before winter sets in. In addition to the park being available for individual walks and the enjoyment of nature, many group activities took place there this year. The City-run Environmental Nature Camp for students used the park for its summer activities and headquarters, and the soccer field was much used for team games and practices. Paddle Boston, under the direction of Larry Smith, drew many people to the park for canoe and kayak rentals, as did the orienteering trail established a year ago with the help of an Eagle Scout project that was given a grant from the Friends. The park is an important resource for urban wildlife and is a "hotspot" for bird-watching for both local resident and migrating birds. Bird-watching trips to the park this year included those organized by the Friends, the Newton Conservators and the Brookline Bird Club. This year at least 26 different species of colorful migrating warblers were recorded at the park as well as American Woodcocks and a Barred Owl. Over the years more than 185 different bird species have been seen at the park.

In late September, a group from the Friends and Newton Conservators enjoyed a fun new activity at the park, a "BioBlitz" led by Jon Regosin (former Deputy Director of Mass Fisheries and Wildlife). Using the app "iNaturalist" the group walked the park, surveying and photographing the area for interesting new species of plants and animals. We hope that this activity will continue in the coming years and lead to a better understanding of the plants and animals that inhabit the park.

The Community Gardens were very active with the gardeners planting bountiful plots despite the frequent rain this summer. Many people visiting the park enjoy seeing the beautiful flowers blooming in these plots.

Katherine Howard led a group of volunteers from the Friends and Newton Conservators to remove non-native invasive plants from the park. We thank Katherine and these volunteers for their efforts in this regard. While it is a never-ending battle, I am happy to say that because of these efforts Woodcock Meadow has once more hosted American Woodcocks that returned and did their mating ritual flights this spring. In the coming months Jon Regosin and Katherine will continue the work of keeping Woodcock Meadows as a grassland habitat. Such grassland habitats are becoming increasingly rare in eastern Massachusetts. Through a process known as "scarfing," trial patches of the meadow will be scraped and turned over so that the layer of organic material deposited each year is removed. This will help ensure that the grassland plants are not replaced by non-grassland vegetation. So, if you see "disturbed" areas in Woodcock Meadow please realize that they are part of this project to keep this meadow as a grassland habitat for woodcocks and other wildlife.

I am happy to report that the long-awaited Conservation Restriction (CR) for Nahanton Park is finally moving forward. While this process has taken far longer than anticipated, the needed land survey of the park has recently been completed and this survey plan, as well as a metes and bounds description, are in the process of being forwarded by the City to the state for official recording. Once this has been done, it will allow the actual CR drafting to move forward. The officers of the Friends of Nahanton Park will continue to work with the City and the City's Legal Department to push for this protection for the park. Please do not hesitate to tell your City Councilor that you support a CR for Nahanton Park.


On September 30, a general meeting of the Friends of Nahanton Park was held at the park by the Nature Center. After interesting discussions on potential problems at the park and ideas for future projects the Friends might consider, an election of officers was held. The current officers, (Chris Hepburn, President, Suzette Barbier, Vice President, Donna Cohen, Treasurer, and Judy Hepburn, Clerk) were re-elected to continue for the coming year.

In order to protect the unique treasure that is Nahanton Park we hope you will renew your annual membership or join us as a new Friend of Nahanton Park. Please also tell your friends and neighbors who use and enjoy Nahanton Park to join us as well. We need people like you to help maintain Nahanton Park's unique beauty and accessibility and to support the habitat for wildlife living there.

The enclosed donor card offers an opportunity, beginning with a \$25 membership, to be kept updated on important Park issues, activities and public walks. Providing your email address on the card will help us keep you informed in a timely manner. The Friends is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, and all contributions are tax deductible.

We look forward to hearing from you, and together, maintaining Nahanton Park's unique features and accessibility and enjoying the many species of wildlife that make it their home.

Cordially and with thanks,

  
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