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Eileen Entin, Chair **April 2019** **Elaine Quinlan, Editor**

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CLC's Annual Meeting on Tuesday, April 23

Citizens for Lexington Conservation is excited to announce that Alexandra Bartsch, a resident of Lexington since 1968, a beekeeper in Lexington since 1978, and one of three Master Beekeepers in Massachusetts, will be the featured speaker at Citizens for Lexington Conservation's annual meeting on April 23.

With the support of the Conservation Commission, Citizens for Lexington Conservation and other town groups, Alexandra is leading the effort to make Lexington a Bee City. The Bee City program (<https://www.beecityusa.org>) is operated by the Xerxes Society as a way of promoting and certifying towns and campuses that actively promote and encourage pollinators. Alexandra will talk about the process of certifying Lexington as a Bee City, what it will mean for the Town, and town-wide efforts to protect our honeybees and other pollinators.

The annual meeting will be held in the dining room at the Lexington Community Center, 39 Marrett Road at 7 pm on Tuesday, April 23. Refreshments will be provided, and everyone is welcome to attend and learn about this important program and the important role that pollinators play in our ecology.



2019 CLC dues are payable now. The status of your dues payment can be found on the address label of snail-mailed newsletters, or near the top of the email announcing this issue. If it says Dues Paid April 2018 (or earlier), it is time to renew your membership for 2019.

Annual membership to CLC is \$20.00. Suggested membership levels are:

- _____ \$ 20 (Twig)
- _____ \$ 50 (Branch)
- _____ \$100 (Tree)
- _____ \$(Other)

You may pay your dues using PayPal on the CLC Website (<http://www.clclex.org>).

If you prefer to contribute by mail, please send your name, address and email (or phone number), along with your check, to:

Citizens for Lexington Conservation
P.O. Box 292
Lexington, MA 02420-0003

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone number: _____

New Member Renewal

Go Green. Check here if you would like to have your newsletter in color with live links, using a download link from an email, instead of the paper snail mail.

Membership fees support our organization. CLC is a registered 501(c)(3) organization and all contributions are tax deductible.

CITIZENS FOR LEXINGTON CONSERVATION 2019 SPRING WALKS

All walks are free and open to the public

Birding Walks:

Saturday, April 27, 7-8:30 am: Birding Wright Farm

Start your celebration of Earth Day 2019 at Wright Farm with some early morning birding by joining us to kick off a daylong Bio-Blitz effort as part of iNaturalist's City Nature Challenge. We will be looking to start the daylong species tally for the property as we search for both resident species as well as early-season migrants. Please park along Volunteer Way located across from the farm, which is located at 241 Grove Street.

Walk Leader: Keith Ohmart (kohmart@verizon.net)

Sunday, May 5, 8-10 am: Birding Lower Vine Brook

Warblers are small, beautiful tropical birds that fly north to breed every year. Over 15 different species stop off in this sheltered area during their spring migration to their nesting grounds in northern New England and Canada. Depending on the weather and the foliage, you may see a dozen species in a morning. Children with adults are welcome. Wear boots if it's wet, and bring binoculars and a bird book. No dogs please. More than light rain or lightning will cancel the event. If the weather is uncertain call the leader. Meet at the entrance to the Lower Vine Brook Conservation Area opposite 121 Vine Street.

Walk Leader: Harry West (671-461-9500, hwest2020@gmail.com)

Wednesday, May 8, 6-8:30 am: Birding the Western Greenway

The Western Greenway consists of over 1,200 acres of interconnected open space in Waltham, Lexington, and Belmont. There has been little documentation of migratory or breeding birds in many parts of the Greenway. We will choose a section in Lexington that most likely few Menotomy Birders know or bird. Amongst our target species we will be checking to see if Blue-winged Warbler returns to an area it has been seen in over the past several years. Meet at Cart Path Lane, off Walnut Street in Lexington.

Walk Leaders: Roger Wrubel (rwrubel@massaudubon.org),
Keith Ohmart (kohmart@verizon.net)

Nature Walks and Other Activities:

Sunday, April 28, 2-4 pm: Lincoln Park Garlic Mustard Pull

Garlic mustard seeds can take up to seven years to sprout, which requires repeated efforts to control and eradicate this aggressive invasive species. Come join CLC's multi-year effort to pull this year's progeny from along the pathways in Lincoln Park. We will be shifting our focus this year to the Middleby Road entrance. Bring gardening gloves. Steady rain cancels. Meet at the Fitness Path Trail entrance on Middleby Road across from the entrance to the Bridge School where you may park.

Leaders: Elaine Quinlan (978-995-5794, ejquinlan2@gmail.com),
Judy Mello (781-861-7744, jmacmello@comcast.net)

Tuesday, April 30: Senior Sneaker Walk (see details on page 6)

Tuesday, May 7: Senior Sneaker Walk (see details on page 6)

Sunday, May 12, 2-3 pm: The Apiary at Cotton Farm

Join Alexandra Bartsch, a longtime Lexington resident and Master Beekeeper, for a tour of the beehives at the Cotton Farm orchard on Marrett Road. We will be opening the hive and tour the inner workings of these fascinating pollinators and maybe even meet the queen! Veils will be provided for those who wish to venture close. No dogs please. Park along Marrett Road and walk down the entrance road to the property to the meeting point. Walk Leader: Alexandra Bartsch (albartsch@rcn.com)

Tuesday, May 14: Senior Sneaker Walk (see details on page 7)

Saturday, May 18, 12 noon-1:30 pm: Family Led ACROSS Lexington Walk

Get the kid's eye perspective of ACROSS Lexington's Route A, the first installment of the ACROSS system and still one of its most popular routes. This family led walk will traverse approximately half of the route taking in portions of the Lower Vine Brook, Chiesa Farm, and Parker Meadow Conservation properties along the way. Walking surfaces will be a mixture of paved surfaces and unpaved foot trails. Well-behaved dogs on leashes welcome. Meet behind the Depot in Lexington Center on the Bikeway. Walk Leader(s): Ian Fox and family (ifox@alumni.upenn.edu)

Saturday, May 25, 10-11:30 am: Cataldo Reservation Interpretive Walk

Cataldo Reservation, a 5-acre Conservation Area that lies in East Lexington near the Minuteman Bikeway, has been undergoing a restoration project for the last two years. The focus has been on controlling the invasive plant infestation and building a healthy native plant population to support the local fauna. Mill Brook runs through Cataldo Reservation and, until the recent restoration efforts, has been largely invisible to passersby on the trail. Come take a walk and see the new views of Mill Brook and the surrounding flood plain as well as the new plantings that are beginning to become established. Lexington Conservation Steward Holly Samuels, who has been leading the restoration effort, will lead the walk. Meet at the property entrance on Bow Street adjacent to the Minuteman Bikeway.

Walk Leader: Holly Samuels (hollygardendesign@gmail.com)

Saturday, June 8, 10 am – 12 noon: Wright Farm/Bedford Res Walk

The acquisition of the Wright Farm property by the town has opened up the possibilities of connecting to open spaces in neighboring towns. This walk will explore the walking connection to Bedford's Old Reservoir property and a portion of its trail system. The distance covered will be between one and two miles with a combination of street walking and unpaved woods trails. The trails include some moderate slopes. Bedford requires that all participants sign a waiver of liability form, which will be provided at the beginning of the walk. Children and well-behaved dogs on leash are welcome. Park in the Wright Farm driveway which circles behind the house. Wright Farm is located at 241 Grove St. Walk Leader: Phil Hamilton (pkhamilton45@gmail.com)

Thank You Walk Leaders

CLC's walks program is entirely dependent on our walk leaders, who are all volunteers, for its continuing success. We wish to express a sincere thank you to Ned Eisner, Bobbie Hodson, Kate Fricker, Keith Ohmart, Eileen Entin, Bob Haussein, John Andrews, Tom Whelan, Fran Ludwig, Adam Green, and Alex Dohan for their leadership of our Fall 2018 walks and activities.

2019 Spring Senior Sneaker Walk Series

*Put a SPRING in your step with one or more of these SPRING walks!
No car necessary to reach these incredible natural areas within and around Lexington.*

Walks are organized by the Citizens for Lexington Conservation, in cooperation with Lexington Human Services. All walks will be on unpaved surfaces with the challenge of occasional roots and stones. Wear comfy shoes and dress for the weather. Optional: bring water, snack, camera, and walking stick, if you like! Transportation will be via Lexpress, no bus fare required between the hours of 9 am and 1 pm.

To Register: Registration is free but is required for those intending to use Lexpress. To reserve your spot for one or more walks call 781-698-4840.

Tuesday, April 30: Beaver Brook North (mostly level terrain):

This 254-acre reservation features a variety of plant habitats, including meadows, new-growth forest, mature oak-hickory forest, red maple swamps, cattail marshes, and an abundance of wildlife, including great horned owls, hawks, and more.

Details: This walk departs from the Lexington Community Center, 39 Marrett Road. Please join your guide, Keith Ohmart, in time to catch the 9:08 am Lexpress bus departing from the Community Center. (He will be holding a Senior Walk sign.) The group will travel together via Lexpress to Avalon Lexington Hills. This outing will last approximately two hours, with participants returning via Lexpress to the Lexington Community Center by 11:35 am. (Please do not park at Avalon Lexington Hills.)

Tuesday, May 7: Burlington Landlocked Forest (more challenging terrain):

This 250-acre vibrant natural area contains numerous trails that wind past ravines, through pine forests, and is home to many species of wildlife, including deer and wild turkeys.

Details: This walk officially departs from Depot Square, 13 Depot Square. Please join your guide, Keith Ohmart in time to catch the 9 am Lexpress bus departing from the Depot. (He will be holding a Senior Walk sign). The group will travel together via Lexpress to the Turning Mill Road trail entrance. If you wish to travel to the trail entrance on your own, meet in the parking lot on Turning Mill Road, between Mountain Road and Grimes Road by 9:10 am, where the group from Lexpress will join you. This outing will last approximately 2 hours, with participants returning via Lexpress to the Depot by 11:22 am.

Tuesday, May 14: Arlington Reservoir (mostly level terrain):

This one mile walk begins in Lexington's Cataldo Reservation and loops around the Arlington Reservoir. This walk includes many scenic viewpoints, around a water area that is habitat for several types of fish, and even home to snapping turtles and swans. Nearly 150 species of birds have been spotted in this area.

Details: This walk officially departs from Lexington Community Center, 39 Marrett Road. Please join your guide, Susan Barrett who will be holding a Senior Walk sign, at 9:30 am, in time to catch the 9:35 am Lexpress bus departing from the Community Center. If you wish to travel to the trail entrance on your own, meet at the entrance to the Cataldo Reservation on Bow Street, adjacent to the Minuteman Bikeway. This outing will last approximately 2 hours, with participants returning via Lexpress to the Community Center by 11:50 am. Note that the walk is less than 2-hours, but we will take our time to enjoy the scenic area.

**The Stewardship Report:
Updates from the Conservation Division
and the Conservation Stewardship Program**

By Jordan McCarron

The crocuses in my yard are in full bloom; a welcome sign of spring and a reminder that garlic mustard is not long to follow! Indeed, the 2019 stewardship season began in earnest on March 9th with an apple pruning workshop and follow-up work session on March 16th at our Cotton Farm orchard. This year, we have expanded our management activities at the Cotton Farm orchard with the hopes of cultivating a dedicated Orchard Steward Crew committed to maintaining the orchard, pruning, grafting, and fertilizing on an annual basis, and helping organize an annual apple festival at the orchard.

The pruning workshop on March 9th and a grafting workshop scheduled for Saturday, April 6th are part of a 3-part Orchard Care Workshop Series with orchardist Denis Wagner aimed at increasing our collective skill level in these areas. For more information and to get involved as an Orchard Steward, visit <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/conservation/conservation-stewardship/pages/orchard-steward-program>.

In other news, our intrepid Steward Sawyers have been out in full force since late March removing a number of blowdowns throughout our trail system. Garlic mustard pulling will begin on Saturday, April 20th with a Stewardship Saturday work session at Cataldo Reservation in East Lexington. Garlic mustard is a particularly pernicious invasive plant that inhibits native plant growth by altering the soil chemistry where it grows and through prolific seed setting. Volunteer pull sessions are scheduled through early May at Dunback Meadow, Lincoln Park, Daisy Wilson Meadow, and Shaker Glen; a full schedule can be found at <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/conservation/land-stewardship>. However, garlic mustard could and should be pulled in your own yards and along your favorite trails; if you can't make it to a scheduled volunteer pull, I highly encourage you to pull it where and when you see it!

Work will continue this season on the new Hayden Woods boardwalk and trail improvement project. The Conservation Division and Stewards received a \$23,000 grant through the State's Recreational Trails Program in 2018 to improve a degraded section of trail that will provide a safe and reliable connection between Hayden Avenue and the trail system at Hayden Woods. This improved trail will then serve as a critical off-road link in the ACROSS Lexington trail system. The entire project consists of nearly 800' of new boardwalk; the Stewards have constructed over 300' of new boardwalk since last spring. Approximately 150' of this boardwalk sits on durable plastic culvert sections—a new design concept for the Stewards. For pictures of the project, visit our [Flickr](#) album.

The Conservation Division has continued its work with [Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture](#) to design much needed infrastructure improvements at our Cotton Farm Conservation Area. The improvements will include a new parking area and accessible trail leading to a viewing platform on the pond. Additionally, the existing driveway that cuts through the property will be re-naturalized. We have currently completed the permitting process and are awaiting construction documents and a cost estimate for the project. Conservation staff hope to go out to bid for construction on the project this spring.

The newly expanded Idylwilde Community Garden will open this year with more than 30 new plots. The program provides half (10' x 20') and full (20' x 20') plots for rent each year; half plots cost \$25 and full plots cost \$50. Water and roto-tiller services are provided with each plot; a limited amount of communal work to upkeep the gardens is required of each gardener. Registration information for the community garden program can be found at [Town of Lexington Community Gardens](#).

At the same time, Conservation staff and Stewards will be working this spring to clean out and re-naturalize the now-closed Dunback Meadow Community Gardens; several workdays will be scheduled this spring to assist with this project. Long-term plan for the restoration of garden area and meadow along Allen Street are forthcoming.

The Conservation Division will continue its work this season on deer browse research at Cranberry Hill Conservation Area through a partnership with the Minuteman Technical High School Environmental Science program and Harvard Forest. Two research plots are currently set up in Cranberry Hill and include fenced-off deer enclosure areas and adjacent control plots; the experiment measures vegetation height and diversity in an effort to gain a better understanding of deer impacts on our forest ecosystems.

At Joyce Miller's Meadow, the Conservation Division and Stewards will continue to work with staff from Zoo New England to establish natural populations of [New England Blazing Star](#), a state listed Species of Special Concern. Volunteers from the Stewards and Community Gardening program have assisted with propagating the flower in pots at their homes; a variety of other pollinator-friendly wildflowers have been planted as well. The next planting will occur in the meadow in late summer 2019. Information on the project can be found [here](#).

As always, there will be many more opportunities to volunteer and get involved with the

Stewards throughout the 2019 season. Information on our Conservation Stewardship Program, including how to become a member, can be found [here](#) or by contacting Jordan McCarron, Conservation Stewardship Coordinator, at jmccarron@lexingtonma.gov or 781-698-4532.

Cataldo Reservation Restoration Project Update

By Holly Samuels, Lexington Conservation Steward

The process of opening the path area at Cataldo Reservation continues with a lot of work done last fall before the New Year. The focus is now on the area leading into the woods and the 'pond' area, which is actually just a bend in the Mill Brook that widens and slows, appearing to be a pond.



A great Blue Heron was spotted there last fall and there is rumor of a Screech Owl inhabiting now. A length of path in this area that gets frequent flooding may be a candidate for a short boardwalk. That possibility will be explored this year. Much of the chaotic fallen lumber covered by Multiflora Rose has been cut and piled on large sheets of cardboard to suppress more weed seed. This clearing also allows walkers to seek higher ground and avoid the mud.



Thanks to a couple of our volunteer chainsaw masters, Denis and Steve, some of the larger fallen trees have been cut giving access for new planting to occur starting in May.



There are already signs of last year's perennial plantings returning along the brook, including Great Blue Lobelia, Bee Balm, Blue Flag Iris, Phlox, and Marsh Marigold. There

is also a lot of Goldenrod and Aster that was apparently existing under all the accumulated brush and vines. The Fragrant Sumac took a beating from rabbit browse over the winter, but last year was the same story and it miraculously survived. Viburnum dentatum and Clethra plantings look good. Whatever plants survived from the new plantings in the last two years get more added this year in addition to new trials.

The Lexington Stewardship Saturday on April 20th will be at Cataldo when we will once again have a dumpster to remove some of the extraneous brush. We will also be pulling Garlic Mustard. If anyone is free and would like to lend a hand, please drop by anytime from 9 am – 12 noon.

(Parking: shoulder of South Rindge Avenue. Meet at trailhead between numbers 5 and 7 South Rindge Avenue.)

Hayden Woods Boardwalk Project Update

By Keith Ohmart

Those of you who hike the trails in Hayden Woods may have come across the completed section of an extensive new boardwalk being constructed on the east side of the property behind the Stone Meadow Golf Course.

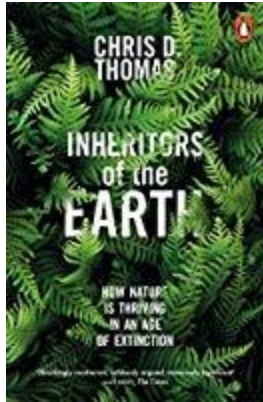
The work began in the spring of last year, and is expected to be finished by the end of this year. When completed the new boardwalk will total approximately 760' in length, comprised of a 600' section and a shorter 160' section.

Funding for the purchase of materials to construct the boardwalk has been obtained by the Lexington Conservation Department from a grant under the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The funding for this program comes from the Federal gas tax on the sale of fuels for recreational vehicles.



In return for receiving RTP funds, volunteer labor must be supplied under a matching formula to complete each project. The Lexington Conservation Stewards have been supplying the bulk of this labor supplemented with invaluable assistance from members of the LHS Track & Field Team who have carried in the lumber to the actual work site. Recruitment of corporate volunteer work groups has also been successful with volunteers from Thermo Fisher Scientific and Shire participating this past fall. If you are interested in participating as a volunteer on this project, sign up to become a Conservation Steward on the Conservation Department web page.

When completed, the new boardwalk will reopen a long disused section of perennially wet trail that will provide access to the Hayden Woods trail system from an entrance along Hayden Avenue just a short walk from Waltham Street. Walking along Waltham Street under Route 2 provides a connection to the Western Greenway trail system on DCR's Beaver Brook North Reservation behind Brookhaven.



“Inheritors of the Earth”
How Nature is Thriving in an Age of Extinction
By Chris D. Thomas
A Review by Keith Ohmart

If you are ready to throw in the towel in despair in the face of what climate scientists are forecasting regarding the impacts of climate change on the natural world I urge you to pause and read Chris Thomas’ latest book. What he has to say is not to excuse or overlook the projected impacts of climate change, but instead to place these in a much larger context measured in periods of a geological rather than a human time frame.

His book is a reminder that life on earth has never been static, that change has been the order of things from the very beginning of life on this or any planet. What Thomas urges is that instead of focusing solely on what is being lost, that we should instead open ourselves up to the acknowledgement and appreciation of newly emerging species as conditions on this earth change.

While acknowledging the damage that human beings have done and are continuing to do to the planet, Thomas’ book is a provocative exercise in increasing our awareness that just as the natural world responded to past extinction events with the proliferation of new species, that the same evolutionary process is continuing all around us and will do so into the future.

For those of us invested in conservation affairs, this book offers a thought provoking perspective on where we can choose to focus our efforts. I don’t know if I am personally ready to embrace the place of oriental bittersweet in our woodlands but I found that reading this book was extraordinarily helpful in reframing how to think about these choices.

Wright Farm Spring Celebration on Saturday, April 27

Beginning with an early morning bird walk, continuing with a stewardship project in the mid-morning, and culminating with an afternoon gathering of conservation minded Lexington groups and guided walks, events will be happening at Wright Farm all day. There will also be an ongoing bioblitz as part of the Boston Area [City Nature Challenge](#) that weekend. Lots of fun to be had!! Please join us!

For information on the schedule for the day visit the Lexington Conservation Department web pages and look under Wright Farm Spring Event:

<https://www.lexingtonma.gov/conservation/pages/wright-farm-spring-event>

free & open to all

Photo Credits

Page 2: Bee, by Alexandra Bartsch

Page 9, 10: Cataldo Reservation, provided by Holly Samuels

Page 12: Hayden Woods, provided by Jordan McCarron

Monthly Trail Walks in Bedford

The Bedford Trails Committee conducts free monthly Trail Walks in Bedford the first Saturday of each month. Trail walks vary monthly, from strolls on flat ground to hikes with hills. For detailed info on current and future hikes, please visit:

<https://groups.google.com/group/bedfordma-trails>

Positions Available

Walks Coordinator: CLC conducts walks on conservation and other open space lands in Lexington during the Spring and Fall. We are looking for a volunteer to serve as Walks Coordinator. The duties include contacting previous and potential walk leaders to arrange scheduling details, and publicizing the walks through local media outlets and listserves. Participation in bi-monthly board meetings, while beneficial, is not a requirement. Contact Eileen Entin (eileenhome@gmail.com, 781-862-6418).

Events Coordinator: Each year, CLC features a speaker on conservation, resource, or environmental issues. To deepen and enlarge our educational focus, we are seeking a new film/speaker coordinator to take on the tasks of identifying, scheduling, and publicizing videos and speakers. Our plans are to offer 3-4 events per year as an exciting new way for CLC to continue to raise public awareness regarding local, regional and national environmental issues.

Contact Eileen Entin (eileenhome@gmail.com, 781-862-6418).