



Citizens for Lexington Conservation

PO Box 292, Lexington MA 02420-0003

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Eileen Entin, Chair

APRIL 2023

Ruth M. Ladd, Editor

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*Scan this QR code to
view the newsletter on-
line*



2023-2024 DUES ARE DUE!

Note that our fiscal year is April 1—March 31 so dues are now due for 2023-2024!

Annual membership to CLC is only \$20.00 (what a deal!). Suggested membership levels are:

_____ \$ 20 (Twig)

_____ \$ 50 (Branch)

_____ \$100 (Tree)

_____ \$ Other

You can pay your dues using PayPal on the CLC website (<https://www.clclex.org>).

If you prefer to contribute by mail, please send this form, or the information listed, along with your check payable to “Citizens for Lexington Conservation”, to:

Citizens for Lexington Conservation

P.O. Box 202

Lexington, MA 02420-0002

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____



Looking southwest from the northwest corner of Cotton Farm towards Upper Vine Brook

CLC BOARD

President	Eileen Entin
Treasurer	Roberta “Bobbie” Hodson
Secretary	Pamela Lyons
Membership	Priya Krishnan
Walks Coordinator	Barbara Tarrh
Newsletter Editor	Ruth Ladd
Website Management	Keith Ohmart and Rita Pandey
Archivist	Chaula Patel

HOW WE SPEND YOUR MONEY!

Due to the generosity of our members, many of whose donations have gone beyond the twig and branch and even the tree membership levels, CLC has acquired the financial resources to continue its ongoing activities and undertake two major projects.

For one, with the help of graphic designer Jon Sachs, we have redesigned our website to make CLC’s resources and activities more apparent and easier to access. For example, when you go to the website, you can see information about upcoming events such as the next CLC walk. With a new interface, it is now easier to pay dues on-line and to send inquiries and messages to the CLC portal. (Note that our fiscal year is April 1—March 31 so dues are now due for 2023-2024!)

A second ongoing CLC project is the development and placement of signs in Lexington’s conservation parcels that provide information about the area in which the sign is located. Our first sign, which explains the working and significance of vernal pools, has been installed on a boardwalk in Hayden Woods that crosses a vernal pool. In addition to this first sign, CLC supported the graphic design of the interpretive sign that was purchased and installed by the Conservation Department in Parker Meadow. explaining the concept of biodiversity. We are currently in the process of selecting a site for our next sign, and in that regard we invite anyone who is interested in helping on this project to contact us through the website portal.

Another activity that CLC has supported is the recognition of Lexington as a Bee City, for which CLC pays the annual dues.

In addition, CLC funds support the maintenance of our website, the printing and mailing of our newsletters, costs associated with our annual meeting, and the printing of our brochure which is distributed at CLC walks and other events.

We are grateful to all our members whose generous contributions to CLC have made these projects possible.

IDEAS WANTED!

We welcome submissions for our fall newsletter (subject to board approval) and ideas for articles. They can be submitted from the Contact page on our website.

PAWPAWS IN LEXINGTON? YES!

Barbara Katzenberg

The American pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) is a native US tree, common in the mid-Atlantic and Appalachian states. Its fruit is described as tasting like a cross between a banana, mango and pineapple. Some readers may remember the song, “Where, oh where is pretty little Susi? Pickin’ up pawpaws, puttin’ em in her pockets. Way down yonder in the pawpaw patch.”



Before 2017, botanists had not documented any pawpaw trees that had “naturalized” this far north. Naturalized means a plant is growing somewhere without having been planted. In 2017, bicycling along the Lower Vine Brook path, I saw a patch of tropical looking trees in the midst of the expected oaks, red maples, and junipers. With help from the botanist at Native Plant Trust, we determined that they were pawpaws. Despite there being hundreds of stems in the grove, it is hard to know for sure how many separate individuals there are because pawpaws expand through underground roots, forming large patches with each stem a genetic clone. Our guess is that one pawpaw was planted years ago; it took hold and the grove expended. However, we suspect that at least some of the trees, because of their distance from the original patch, in fact grew from seed, perhaps via the digestive product of a lucky raccoon. Another clue is that the pawpaws are generally not self-pollinating so a grove of genetically identical trees won’t be productive.

But it turns out that the Lower Vine Brook pawpaw patch is not the only one in Lexington: there is an even larger collection in Parker Meadow, close to the Minuteman Bikeway. Similar to Lower Vine Brook, in its area the pawpaw is out-competing both the natives and invasives that populate other parts of these conservation lands. At some point this may become a cause for worry, but for now it’s a fascinating instance of a plant successfully expanding its range.



The author has collected pawpaw leaves to be preserved as specimens for the herbaria of the Native Plant Trust and University of Massachusetts.

PARKER MEADOW BIODIVERSITY SIGN

Keith Ohmart

The second of CLC's planned series of interpretive signs can be found in the Parker Meadow Conservation area located adjacent to the Minuteman Bikeway near the town center. The information on this sign explains in brief the biological richness of this 17 acre property and why, despite its modest size, it serves as a compact living example of the concept of biodiversity.

Each panel of the sign provides a brief description of the various habitats found on this property, which include a seasonal pond, a wildflower meadow, surrounding woodlands and even a red maple swamp. A QR code on the sign takes the viewer to a supporting page on the CLC web site (<https://clclex.org/parker-meadow-bio-diversity/>) that provides additional links to more detailed information, including a link to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's web site, which provides a complete listing of bird species that have been observed on the property over the last several years.

Additional QR codes on the sign connect the viewer to English, Mandarin and Spanish audio files of the text of the sign itself. For those with an interest in citizen science endeavors, there is also a QR code on the sign that connects the viewer to the iNaturalist web site where photos of plant and animal species observed and other observations can be entered in real time.

The signs in this program are intended to provide the viewer with a window into the ecological significance of the settings in which they are placed. The inclusion of QR code links provides an interactive component to this experience to further enrich viewers' understanding and appreciation of these conservation properties, which have been set aside for the enjoyment of all. CLC will be planning additional signs for other of the town's Conservation properties over the next couple of years. Anyone with an interest in assisting CLC with this project and learning more should contact CLC via the website (<https://clclex.org/contact-clc/>).



NEWS FROM LEXCAN

Job Opportunity: Clean Heat Outreach Specialist

Lexington Climate Action Network (LexCAN), in partnership with the Town, is seeking a **part-time Clean Heat Outreach Specialist (CHOS)** to accelerate and assist in the transition to clean, healthy and affordable HVAC and appliances in Lexington homes. The CHOS will conduct outreach, drive energy efficiency program enrollment and participation, and develop communication tools to empower homeowners and residents to play a role in Lexington's progress toward climate change mitigation and resilience goals. *This new position is made possible by a Mass Save Community Education grant.*

Details:

Remote work, with regular attendance at in-person events
10-15 hours per week (flexible)

1 year position (flexible)

Job Description

To apply, send a resume and cover letter to lexclimateaction@gmail.com and mpeard@lexingtonma.gov

New! Lexington Green Network Facebook Group

Perhaps you have heard that LexCAN has started a Facebook group for exchange of local sustainable ideas and conversations. We are welcoming individuals as well as representatives of local climate and environmental groups as a place to connect. Please join us! We are hoping members will share tips, questions, news, ideas and event information to help our community members stay informed and take action to fight climate change personally, locally and beyond. If you are interested in joining, please search for the group "Lexington Green Network" on Facebook and click "Join". Thank you!

HOW ARE YOU RECEIVING THE CLC NEWSLETTER?

Are you currently receiving a paper version of the CLC newsletter via US mail? If so, and you have an email address, we would be grateful if you let us send you an email alerting you that a new edition of the newsletter is available, with a link to the newsletter on the CLC website. Sending the newsletter electronically gets it to you sooner than by snail mail and at the same time saves the printing and postage costs associated with the paper version.

If you are willing to switch from a paper to an on-line copy of the newsletter, please email Priya Krishnan, our Membership Chair, and let her know. Her email is: ashishandpriya@gmail.com.

If you want to continue to receive a paper copy, please confirm your interest by paying the dues (see page 2).

CITIZENS FOR LEXINGTON CONSERVATION

2023 SPRING WALKS

All walks are free and open to the public

Spring 2023 Walk Leaders Appreciation

CLC would like to thank the thoughtful people who've agreed to lead our spring walks. They are not compensated and give freely of their time and expertise to introduce one and all to Lexington's wealth of outdoor resources.

Bobbie Hodson, Dianna Queheillalt, Tom Whelan, Bob Haussein, Keith Ohmart, Jan Ford, Halé Sofia Schatz, Laurene Beaudette, Andrea Golden, and Russ Cohen – THANK YOU!

Walk Leaders Sought!

Are you an amateur naturalist – are you a mycologist, insect lover, lichen expert or do you have other passions to share? Do you have knowledge of local flora or special insight into your favorite conservation land? Citizens for Lexington Conservation is seeking local nature lovers to share their expertise. If you are one of those folks and if you have some time to donate in leading a conservation walk this year, please let us know. Contact Barbara Tarrh, btarrh@gmail.com.

Butterfly Walk, Arlington's Great Meadows

Sunday April 23, 11 am

This 183-acre wet meadow is the largest piece of undeveloped land in the Arlington/Lexington area. The meadow is home to host plants for many overwintering insect larvae/pupae. Target species: Henry's and Brown Elfins. Attendees may continue on to Horn Pond Mountain in Woburn for more Brown Elfins and other butterflies. Co-sponsored by the Mass Butterfly Club. Park at the entrance to Lexington Meadows townhomes, end of Emerson Gardens Rd. (Use Emerson Gardens Rd. for overflow parking.) More than light rain cancels.

Leader: Tom Whelan (781-915-9988, tom@whelanphoto.com)

New! ACROSS Lexington Series!

Session 1—Sunday April 30, 2:00-3:30 pm

Session 2—Sunday May 14, 2:00-3:30 pm

Session 3—Sunday May 28, 2:00-5:00 pm

Explore Lexington as you might not know it! This spring the Greenways Corridor Committee (GCC) will feature a series of walks that are part of its extensive ACROSS Lexington trail system, a network of 14 marked walking and biking routes through historic sites, schools, shared paths, and conservation areas. Longtime GCC member Bob Haussein will lead the leisurely walks and welcomes newcomers to the ACROSS system who would like to try one or more of these routes.

Session 1—Sunday April 30th: 2:00-3:30pm

Begin your exploration of the ACROSS Lexington Trail System with a 2.5-mile easy walk along Route C. This loop connects Arlington Great Meadows with the western edge of the recently renovated trails at the Arling-

ton Reservoir. There might be time to peek into LexFarm. The walk will include easy unpaved trails as well as paved streets and sidewalks. Some trails may be wet, so wear appropriate shoes. Heavy rain cancels. Meet in the parking lot of the Waldorf School, 735 Massachusetts Avenue.

Leader: Bob Haussein (781-862-9102, rhaussein@rcn.com)

Garlic Mustard Pull at Lincoln Park

Sunday May 6, 2-4 pm

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

Leader: Keith Ohmart (781-862-6216, kohmart@verizon.net)

Birding Lower Vine Brook

Sunday May 7, 7-9 am

Lower Vine Brook can be a fantastic area to see a nice selection of warblers, beautiful small tropical birds that migrate north at this time of year. They will eventually reach the forests of northern New England and Canada to breed, but if weather and foliage are right, you may see a dozen species here in a single morning. Dress for the weather (boots if it's wet) and bring binoculars and a bird ID book, or app. Children with adults are welcome. No dogs please. Rain or lightning will cancel the event; if conditions are uncertain, please call the walk leader. Meet at the entrance to Lower Vine Brook conservation area opposite 93 Vine St.

Leader: Harry West (617-461-9500, hwest2020@gmail.com)

Lexpress Walk Series #1

North Street to Depot Square via Lower Vine Brook

Wednesday May 9: 9:30-12 noon

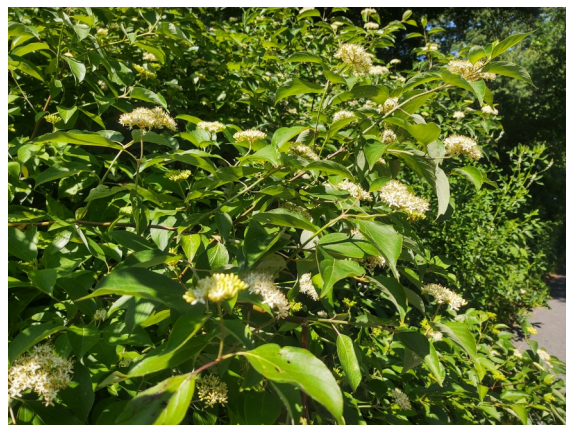
This approximate 2.5 mile walk will trace the course of Vine Brook to where it emerges from under the Town Center at Hayes Lane via gentle woods trails and a paved bicycle path. Meet your guide in time to catch the 9:30 am B Lexpress bus in front of the Depot. Steady rain cancels. **Registration is required – Call Lexington Community Center, 781-698-4840.**

Leader: Keith Ohmart (kohmart@verizon.net)

ACROSS Lexington Series

Session 2—Sunday May 14, 2:00-3:30 pm

Here's another opportunity to explore the ACROSS Lexington Trail System via Route G. This 2.8 mile loop takes you to the northern reaches of Lexington and connects a section of the Vine Brook Bike Path with the upper section of Lower Vine Brook conservation area, and includes a path through Shaker Glen. The walk will include easy unpaved trails as well as paved streets and sidewalks. Some trails may be wet, so wear appropriate shoes.



*Silky Dogwood (Cornus amomum) in
Lower Vine Brook, June 2022*

priate shoes. Heavy rain cancels. Meet at the far end of Rolfe Rd at the entrance to Shaker Glen. Park on Rolfe Rd facing Woburn St.

Leader: Bob Haussein (781-862-9102, rhaussein@rcn.com)

Lexpress Walk Series #2

Brookhaven to Avalon via the Western Greenway

Wednesday May 16, 9:30-12 noon

This 2+ mile walk will explore the trail connection through the Beaver Brook North Conservation property between Brookhaven and Avalon at Lexington Hills via a portion of the Western Greenway Trail. Meet your guide in time to catch the 9 am A2 Lexpress bus in front of the Crafty Yankee on Massachusetts Avenue in Lexington Center. We will depart the bus at the intersection of Waltham Street and Concord Avenue and catch the return A2 bus at our destination at Avalon at Lexington Hills. Steady rain cancels. **Registration is required – Call Lexington Community Center, 781-698-4840.**

Leader: Keith Ohmart (kohmart@verizon.net)

Goat Open House at Chiesa Farm

Saturday May 20, 12-2 pm

Rain date: Sunday May 21, 12-2 pm



Come and join the local Lexington goats for their daily pasture walk through the fields and woodlands at Chiesa Farm. Each season the land provides them with diverse plant life. The goats are very specific as to what they need to eat depending on many factors. We will have two Lexington herds, totaling 12 female dairy goats and some of this spring's goat kids. Learn about the goats and how they are working to keep invasive plants in check. All adults and children are welcome. No dogs please. Park at Diamond Middle School using the Hathaway/Sedge Road entrance or park at Fiske School and walk across to the pastures. No rain date.

Guides: Halé Sofia Schatz and Laurene Beaudette
Contact: laurene@iwebinsight.com

ACROSS Lexington Series

Session 3—Sunday May 28, 2:00-4:30 pm

Take some extra time to enjoy the longest of the ACROSS Lexington routes with a leisurely ramble along Route A (5.2 m), the network's first developed trail. Route A consists of both conservation and neighborhood trails, and runs through portions of Willards Woods, Chiesa Farm and Parker Meadow. Many parts of the walk are pleasantly shaded. The route will include easy unpaved trails as well as paved streets and sidewalks. Some trails may be wet, so wear appropriate shoes. Heavy rain cancels. Meet at the Lexington Depot under the Bikeway overhang. Use public parking.

Leader: Bob Haussein (781-862-9102, rhaussein@rcn.com)

Fauna and Flora of Arlington's Great Meadows

Sunday May 28th: 10 am-noon

Join us for a walk around Arlington's Great Meadows. This 183-acre property is owned by Arlington and located in East Lexington. Late spring brings breeding birds, such as rose-breasted grosbeaks and orioles, and possibly a few late migrants to the meadow and surrounding woods. Depending on interest, we'll also look for seasonal wildflowers and insects and visit Infinity Pond. Wear long pants and have bug spray in reserve. Meet at the end of Emerson Gardens Rd. off Maple St. in Lexington. Some public parking is available just past the entrance to Lexington Meadow townhomes. (Use Emerson Gardens Rd for overflow parking.) More than light rain cancels.

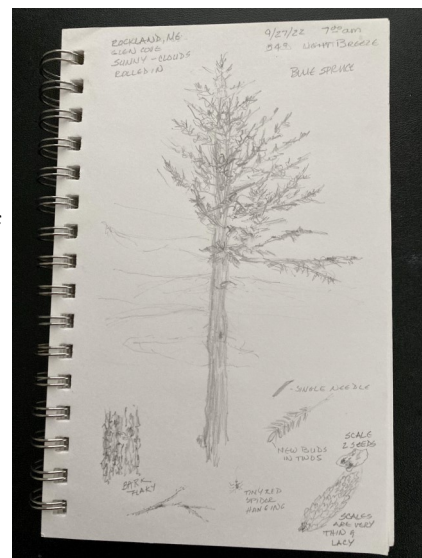
Leader: Andrea Golden (andgold@comcast.net)

Nature Journaling, Sutherland Woods

Saturday June 3, 9-11 am; no rain date

Accompany Arlington artist and naturalist Jan Ford on an inspirational walk around Sutherland Woods. She will work with you to establish what a nature journal can look like. Tree variety and leaf shapes will be the theme. Artists of all skill levels are welcome to share ideas and techniques. Please bring a drawing pad with a sturdy back, and several pencils with erasers. Park along the west side of Sutherland Rd and meet at the entrance to the ball field/playground area. More than light rain cancels.

Leader: Jan Ford (ford.jd@gmail.com)



Wild Edibles of Lexington's Waysides

Wednesday June 14, 6-8 pm

Once again, CLC is delighted to have Russ Cohen return for another walk to teach us about wild edible plants! Lexington is home to over 70 species of edible wild plants, both native and non-native, including plants considered to be weedy or invasive. Some are more nutritious and/or flavorful than their cultivated counterparts. Join Russ Cohen, expert forager and author of "Wild Plants I Have Known...and Eaten", on a two-hour ramble in and around Lincoln Park to learn about at least eighteen edible species. Russ will present information on identification tips, edible portion(s), season(s) of availability and preparation methods, as well as general guidelines for safe and environmentally-responsible foraging. Steady rain cancels. Meet at the Fitness Trail entrance at the crosswalk on Worthen Road across from the Lexington High playing fields.

Leader: Russ Cohen (781-646-7489, eat-wild@rcn.com)



Mayapple, skunk cabbage, and ostrich fern at Lincoln Park, April 2022

DID YOU MISS THE MARCH 18 WOODCOCK WALK?



On Saturday, March 18, about 30 folks, a mix of younger and older birders and other curious participants, came to look for male woodcocks displaying their unusual mating behavior in the fields at Dunback Meadow. After spying a glorious female Northern Harrier on the hunt, the group split in two and patiently waited through the dusk for the sound and sight of woodcock. Those at the old community gardens on Allen Street got lucky and spotted four males showing off, flying more than 50 feet high before fluttering down to the ground. (The young man in the photo has his binocs trained on a female white-tailed deer.)

PHOTOS OF IDLEWILDE CONSERVATION AREA AND COMMUNITY GARDENS



Looking northerly towards the gardens from the southwest side (April 3, 2023)



Looking southerly from the middle of the property towards the garden shed (April 3, 2023)



Spring has sprung in the gardens! (April 3, 2023)