

Friends of Spy Pond Park Newsletter

Summer 2019

Park Closings for Shoreline and Path Restoration

By Emily Sullivan, Environmental Planner & Conservation Agent

PHOTO BY EMILY SULLIVAN



Haven Contracting workers install coir fascine along Spy Pond Park shoreline to curb erosion and facilitate new plant growth

The schedule for this project is always dependent on weather. At this time, however, Haven Contracting will continue to install the coir fascines for Spy Pond Park into next week, will start planting mid-next week, and will install helical piers for the overlook in 2 weeks. Spy Pond Park will likely be closed starting Monday, 6/24 for 7-10 days to install the porous path. They will complete a portion of the path by 6/30, open for the 4th of July and close for the remainder after 7/7 for 7-10 days to complete the path. The playground will remain open throughout this period.

The following sign has been erected concerning shoreline access to direct the public regarding this project:

Multiple sections of Spy Pond's shoreline are currently being restored to preserve shoreline habitat and improve water quality while reducing erosion. In order to allow vegetation to fully establish, access to the water's edge will be restricted through the use of temporary fencing.

Subsequent to shoreline work along Spy Pond Park there will be construction along Scannell Field and to the left of the back of the Boys and Girls Club.

If you have any questions, you may contact:

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Conservation Commission
(781) 316-3012
esullivan@town.arlington.ma.us

Stacey Mulroy
Acting Director,
Recreation Department
(781) 0316-3889
smulroy@town.arlington.ma.us

Rescheduled Bird Walk 5/25/19

By John Sharp

Two people joined me on a perfect, sunny day and we walked for close to an hour along the Spy Pond shore. The birds we saw or heard are listed below. The highlight was a mature Bald eagle (with white head & tail) that circled around over the pond several times as we watched. Robins and grackles were the birds we saw and heard most often, but the vireos were energetically singing here & there as well. We got a few photos, the best being two catbirds probably engaged in a bit of courtship.

- American Robin
- Common Grackle
- House Sparrow
- European Starling
- Song Sparrow
- Mallard
- Canada Goose
- Mute Swan and cygnets
- Bald Eagle
- Eastern Kingbird
- Baltimore Oriole
- Mourning Dove
- Warbling Vireo (heard)
- Double-crested Cormorant



Mature bald eagle

PHOTO BY JOHN SHARP



Two gray catbirds spotted in Spy Pond Park

PHOTO BY JOHN SHARP

Hard Work Paid Off

By Peter Fuller

PHOTO BY PETER FULLER



Young volunteers helping with the raking at Spy Pond Park as part of BU's Global Days of Service

Giving back to the community is something that I believe is worthwhile from many sides. On one side, it is empowering to set to work improving the local community in which you live. On another, it is inspiring to create new ties with people who share your ambitions for serving the community that has given you so much. On a third, it feels good to put in effort and see a positive impact on an environment, especially to see that effective change multiplied by the effort of other volunteer team members. And there are yet many more sides to community service which are rewarding! During the first Work Day of 2019, BU alumni set to work on the cleanup of Spy Pond Park as part of the Boston University Alumni Association Global Days of Service during the month of April. The team worked hard to clean up debris along the shore of the park, pick up refuse that had accumulated over the winter months in the pond, gather fallen branches scattered across the lawns of the park, and rake leaves left over from the fall and winter, to begin beautifying the park for this season.

Members of the Friends of Spy Pond Park staff joined us BU volunteers and together the progress we made in three hours was quite apparent. None of us seemed discouraged by the blustery conditions we found ourselves working in. Some of the regular FSPP staff turned out to be BU alumni themselves, and it was a treat to hear them recall their days on campus as students. In sum, it was a highly productive, enjoyable, and motivating service experience to be a part of!

Excitement at the Feast of the East

By Karen L. Grossman

Thanks to FSPP volunteers Sarah Wilkinson and Sam W., we were able to load equipment from our shed to the location of our booth in East Arlington across from the Fox Library.

Setup and breakdown were easy with helpers from neighboring tables. We had a regular flow of visitors who signed up to receive communication from us., made donations, admired our photo display board, bought t-shirts and booklets donated by Oaks Plimpton, "Ice Business" and "Market Gardens", that are on sale at our Work Days.

In all, it was a profitable day for the organization that benefitted from having more people learn about our organization. We loved participating in this festive day with joyful parading of our goose, Slime, the fox puppets, dolphins, and other wildlife. Thanks to Betsy Leondar-Wright, Lally Stowell, Sam W., Sarah Wilkinson, Pushpinder Syal, and Anne Ellinger for their parade enthusiasm.

The most excitement, however, was a memorable first experience about halfway through the afternoon. Although breezy weather was evident from the start, we kept things under control with little rocks holding down the paper literature on our table. However, there was a gust of wind that blew an A frame sign across the street into the path of oncoming traffic! As we turned to discover what was causing the crash of a car into the sign, we realized instantly that the left side of our canopy previously held in place with heavy weights was lifting up carried by the wind. Terrified the whole canopy would blow away, we lurched up to grab the other legs. However, much to our dismay, the whole canopy landed upside down with legs in the air on top of the recycling committee's canopy to the right of us!

It was so high up we couldn't budge it to bring it down! We glanced around and, lucky for us, three Arlington policemen were standing nearby. When they saw this emergency, they sprang into action, climbed on a nearby bench and with their help, we managed to push the legs sticking up in the air into a downward direction and back onto the ground. We quickly tied them to a nearby tree and a chair to make sure we didn't have a repeat of this calamitous situation! We were so relieved that Officer Mike and his fellow officers came to our rescue. We offer our deepest gratitude to them all. Probably, this was the most unusual example of Arlington's brave officers acting in the line of duty that day.

Although no one caught our predicament in a photo or video, every time I tell about the experience, I laugh and will continue to do so for a long time! Next year the FSPP booth at Feast of the East will again be under the usual auspices of Outreach Co-Chair Sally Hempstead and Marshall McCloskey who were experiencing excitement of their own on a wonderful vacation in Greece.

A Golden Opportunity

By Betsy Leondar-Wright

The pond water is unusually low, as it was drawn down to give access for the shoreline construction. This means that we can walk where it's usually underwater—which gives the pond's friends a chance to clean up that area.

One person who jumped on this chance is Sam W., age 16, who spent parts of two days picking up glass near the boat ramp. Why don't more of us walk the newly exposed areas, wearing gloves and carrying trash bags? The dogs and boaters and waders whose feet touch the bottom in the future will thank us.

Although the water level is lower than normal, **please do not walk onto the pond's banks from the exposed beach area.** The focus of the existing restoration project is to stabilize the banks and replant them with appropriate native plantings. All invasive removal and weeding is being conducted by a landscape contractor. Thank you for staying off the pond banks!

Conservation Commission Modifies Wetland Permits for Lawncare Practices

The Conservation Commission has modified wetland permits for lawncare practices, to create cleaner waters, less algae, and eliminate fish kills. This follows the Ocean River Institute's recommendations detailing Mystic Watershed conditions.

YourArlington tells the story of Arlington's Conservation Commission changing their wetland orders and conditions so that these lawns will no longer be fertilized by polluting quick-release fertilizer: <https://www.yourarlington.com/arlington-archives/town-school/environment/15757>

Could You Be a FSPP Volunteer?

By Sally Hempstead

Do you love to be outdoors in a beautiful setting? Does any type of gardening make you smile? Are conservationists the kind of people you want to hang with? Do I have a nice place for you and it's just around the corner. Spy Pond Park has all these things and more and we need you to make us complete. Go to fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org and check out our Work Days, which are once a month from April through October, and you will experience all of the above. This year we will not have a June date and we especially need more people in August. Help man our booth at Town Day in September or Feast of the East in June and discover

how wonderful Arlington folks can be. Work with children of all ages at our Fun Day in September and channel your inner kid. Always wanted to write for a newspaper? Our tri-yearly newsletter is just the venue for a budding journalist. Poems, stories, nature articles featuring Spy Pond as well as ideas and comments will put you on our pages. This is a friendly family park with picnic tables, a playground, a pond, a boat ramp and plenty of benches to enjoy the view. All we need is you and your neighbors to come and support us. After all, we are in the neighborhood.

President's Letter

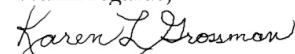
Dear Friends,

Summer is here and much is going on related to Spy Pond and Spy Pond Park. Work on the Spy Pond Edge Protection and Erosion Control Project along Spy Pond Park is progressing. Haven Contracting has posted their work plans, slightly behind schedule due to weather constraints. They have installed the coir fascine at the water's edge and will begin planting. We'll eagerly watch the emerging shoreline and path upgrades and will keep you posted about the progress. As we receive notices about updates to the 47 Spy Pond Lane design review, we will also continue to send them out to people for whom we have email addresses.

We look forward to seeing you at our Work Days and/or Fun Day on September 21 when you can volunteer to help us, too. Betsy Leondar-Wright is already busy planning fun things for families and individuals to do. We'll be partnering again with the Arlington Land Trust to provide trips to Elizabeth Island, always a favorite activity! We hope you can join us.

I'd like to welcome some new additions to our board: Julie McBride, Web Developer; Jenny Babon, Publicity Co-Chair; and Laura Homer, Photographer/Videographer. It is great to have these people step forward to volunteer in our efforts to raise awareness and increase support for what we do. We'd welcome your help, too. Thanks to the small group who helped mail out our annual dues/donation solicitation: Marshall McCloskey, Elaine Crowder, Liz Blumenthal, Bill Reardon, and Adrienne Landry. We are grateful if you have responded already. If you haven't, yet, we encourage you to do so. On behalf of the FSPP board, I thank you for all the support we get for beautiful Spy Pond Park.

Warm regards,



Karen L. Grossman

President

Friends of Spy Pond Park

Friends of Spy Pond Park next meeting

at

**Karen Grossman's
Sunday, July 28, 2019
at 7:00 p.m.
32 Hamilton Road #402**

RSVP (optional) to 781-646-5990
email fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org

Park on Linwood Street off Mass. Ave. or on Lakehill off
Lake St. at the far end of the complex.

To join Friends of Spy Pond Park...

Send your annual dues (\$15 individual, \$25 household, \$5 low-income) to:
FSPP, P.O. Box 1051, Arlington, MA 02474-0021
For more information, call a Friends officer.

President: Karen L. Grossman	(781) 646-5990
General Vice-President: Open	
Treasurer: Joanie Walls	(703) 881-1109
Recording Secretary: Marshall McCloskey	(617) 548-9877
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Elaine Crowder	(781) 648-1927
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Chair for Outreach/Park Events:	
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Fundraising Chair: Open	
Photographers and Videographers:	
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Ram Subramanian	ramkumar@gmail.com

Newsletter contributions and general comments can be sent to
fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org

Friends of Spy Pond Park

• <http://www.friendsofspypondpark.org>

• P.O. Box 1051

• Arlington, MA 02474-0021

Remaining 2019 FSPP Work and Fun Days

By Lally Stowell

For each monthly Work Day, members of the Beautification Committee will be available to assign tasks, work together with volunteers, answer questions and welcome suggestions. We have a limited supply of tools, so if you have rakes, gloves and/or clip-pers, they would be greatly appreciated. Please bring water, too.

July 27, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. (rain date July 28, 1-4 p.m.)

Aug. 24, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. (rain date Aug. 25, 1-4 p.m.)

Sept. 28, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. (rain date Sept. 29, 1-4 p.m.)

Oct. 19, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. (rain date Oct. 20, 1-4 p.m.)

Sept. 21 Fun Day, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. (rain date Sept. 22, 1-4 p.m.)

Fun Day involves children's activities in Spy Pond Park, not a scheduled Work Day.

Liability waivers are required for all participants in the above Work and Fun Day activities. If you are working, please download the form from the FSPP website, fill it out beforehand and bring it with you. Children below 18 years of age must have parental signature to participate in Spy Pond Park activities.



BU alumni rest between activity at Linwood Beach on the windy day in April doing service for BU's Global Days of Service in Spy Pond Park

PHOTO BY DANA QUICKLEY