

# Friends of Spy Pond Park Newsletter

## Summer 2022

### FSPP Maintenance

By Adrienne Landry

PHOTO BY BU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



Adrienne Landry (l), FSPP Beautification Committee, congratulated BU Alumni for a job well done for the 2022 BU Global Service Day in Spy Pond Park

Spring has sprung and so have lots of plants - rather quickly of late. It is a delight to report that all twelve native plants planted last year have come back and appear to be thriving. The FSPP volunteers planted fragrant sumac, winterberry and yarrow last season. We have ordered more winterberry, button-bush (a shoreline stabilizing plant), and two ground covers, foam flower and dwarf crested iris. There are twelve new plants in all. Our goal is to plant twenty this season. The established native wildflowers Joe-Pye weed, goldenrod, milkweed and Solomon's seal are coming back in good condition.

While we continue to reduce the numbers of invasive plants each year, many of them have come back too. We continue to kill them using vinegar and digging them out by the roots.

In addition to Beautification Team members, Lally Stowell and Sharon Green, many thanks go the Work Day volunteers who come by and do all they can to help, including alumnae from the BU Global Days of Service, members of Zhen Red Chuan Martial Arts, the Gibbs School Green Team and two members of the Tiger Scouts and their Moms. Many thanks also go to Seth, Julie, Linda and Bill for their extra help and leadership on and in-between Work Days.

While working in the beds, more and more people stop and ask what we are doing. They are curious and when they learn what we are doing, they express gratitude and thanks.

If you want to get your hands in soil and cannot make it to a Work Day, please contact [fsppvolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:fsppvolunteer@gmail.com) and we can set up a time to work together. We will prep the soil for planting, plant new plants, or do some directed weeding.

### Volunteer Opportunities 2022

#### Fun Day Volunteers:

What are you doing on September 24? You're invited to volunteer at the 20th (almost) annual Fun Day in Spy Pond Park. Wouldn't you like to help some kids and adults enjoy nature and learn to care for the pond? Email coordinator Betsy Leondar-Wright at [betsy@classmatters.org](mailto:betsy@classmatters.org) or call 781-648-0630 to grab a role.

#### Co-VP for Communication and Outreach:

Attend Town events and festivals, sign people in on Work-days and distribute information at the FSPP booth to familiarize citizens with the Friends of Spy Pond Park and Spy Pond, discuss their needs and benefits with passers-by, sell t-shirts, distribute Spy and Spy Pond stickers and FSPP brochures, and accept memberships.

Assist in designing a FSPP display board for use at the above events and schedule and erect a display at the Robbins Library, whenever possible.

Solicit articles for the newsletters from knowledgeable and willing friends and neighbors of Spy Pond Park approximately three weeks before the deadline announced at a prior FSPP meeting, send collected information to the President for editing.

Have desired number of newsletters printed and distribute and maintain a supply of newsletters and brochures at the Arlington libraries and in plastic display cases on park bulletin boards.

#### Assistant Treasurer:

Submit Massachusetts Form PC (Public Charity) and Federal form 990 postcard (EZ or N depending) by May 15 of each year for the previous year.

MA annual report due in November. Can do online at [https://corp.sec.state.ma.us/corp/loginsystem/login\\_form.asp?FilingMethod=I](https://corp.sec.state.ma.us/corp/loginsystem/login_form.asp?FilingMethod=I)

Send acknowledgements via bulk merge mail or snail mail for the contributions.

#### Assistant Bulk Mailing Coordinator:

Manage nonprofit mailing status, payment of fees, and organize and facilitate dues/donation solicitation mailings in May and November.

# One afternoon in June...

By Betsy Leondar-Wright



PHOTOS BY BETSY LEONDAR-WRIGHT

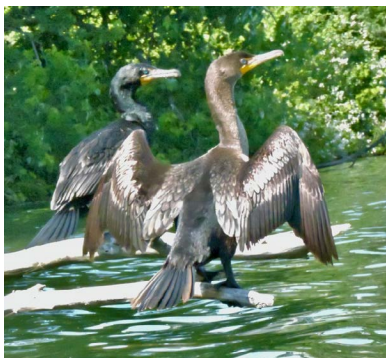
Every paddle on Spy Pond brings a wealth of natural wonders.

On June 11, we went out for just 2 hours and guess what we saw?

A whole family of cygnets



Cormorants drying their wings



An abandoned swan egg

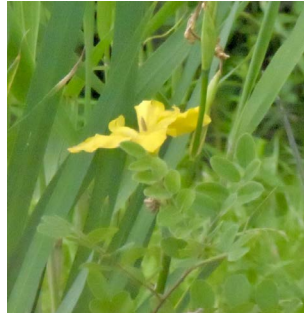


Lots and lots of turtles



PHOTOS BY BETSY LEONDAR-WRIGHT

Wild iris on the island



Baby bunny on a lawn



PHOTOS BY BETSY LEONDAR-WRIGHT

Muskrat swimming



Baby ducklings



Protective papa swan



## Canoe for a Cause

The MyRWA needs you! Come out to one of their summer field days to help remove invasive water chestnuts from the Mystic River — you can volunteer on the water or on land!

Wednesday, July 6 | 9-11 AM | [Details & Registration](#)

Thursday, July 7 | 2-4 PM | [Details & Registration](#)

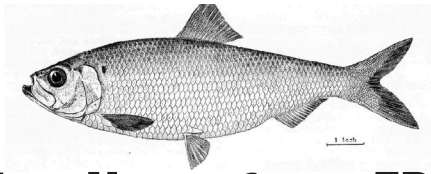
Wednesday, July 27 | 1-3 PM | [Details & Registration](#)

Saturday, July 30 | 9-11 AM | [Details & Registration](#)

Thursday, August 4 | 4-6 PM | [Details & Registration](#)

Thursday, August 11 | 10-Noon | [Details & Registration](#)





## Exciting News from EPA!

In response to the new CSO control plan “draft scopes”, the EPA has sent letters to MWRA, Somerville, and Cambridge, addressing every single one of our concerns, which are described in our “Alewife Brook Path to Zero Sewage Pollution”:

What is a “draft scope”?

A draft scope is framework for the planning of the new Alewife Brook CSO control plan to eliminate sewage pollution. It's a plan to create a plan! Somerville and Cambridge and EPA have until December 31, 2023 to finish collaborating on a plan to make improvements to sewage pollution in the Alewife Brook. The draft scope documents are available in our document library [here](#).

PHOTO © TIM BUGBEE, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



**Southern Crabapple tree blossom along the Alewife, May 8, 2022**  
All Rights Reserved / © [Tim Bugbee](#)

In the guidance letters, EPA asked Somerville, Cambridge, and MWRA for:

1. Future climate change impacts to be incorporated into new sewer infrastructure planning and performance models.
2. An improvement in water quality.
3. Real public participation in the early stages of planning and throughout.
4. Flood control measures.
5. Significant gray and green infrastructure work on DCR property, including at Dilboy Park!
6. Sewer infrastructure upgrades.
7. A tiered rate structure to pay for the CSO work, so that the burden doesn't fall on lower income residents who cannot afford it.

You can download and read the EPA's guidance letters [here](#): [Somerville](#), [Cambridge](#), [MWRA](#)

We are absolutely psyched about the EPA's response – it is clear that they are following Federal policy in response to our input. They are really listening!

This was achieved through Save the Alewife Brook's working partnership with the [Mystic River Watershed Association](#) and the [Charles River Watershed Association](#).

But, most importantly, this was achieved because of **your** interest and support!

**Thank You!**

**Sign the Petition to End Sewage Pollution**

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## President's Letter

Dear Friends,

Summer is here and lots will be going on in Spy Pond Park (SPP) for the renovation of the playground. We are sorry there must be a closure of that area, but we look forward to completion of the renovation with updated equipment. Joe Connelly, Director of Parks and Recreation, will announce the contractor and the time schedule soon. We will keep you up to date via emails.

Our Work Days have been successful this year. If you are an individual who wants to volunteer in July, please indicate your interest to me at [fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org](mailto:fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org). Other months Lauren Bonilla will be the person to contact: [fsppvoter@gmail.com](mailto:fsppvoter@gmail.com). If you have a group of volunteers that wants to help, Lally Stowell is the person to contact: [lallystowell@icloud.com](mailto:lallystowell@icloud.com). We look forward to volunteers who want to provide community service via working in SPP. Betsy Leondar-Wright is soliciting volunteers for Fun Day in Spy Pond Park, also: [betsy@classmatters.org](mailto:betsy@classmatters.org).

Thanks to those who have sent in contributions, responding to our annual solicitation efforts via snail mail and online. If you haven't sent us your dues/donations to date, I hope this serves as a reminder for you to do so, if possible, to support what we do. We appreciate whatever you can do to help enhance the beauty of Spy Pond Park and Spy Pond in Arlington. And, of course, we appreciate all those who responded to our request for items to include in this newsletter. If you'd like to write something or send photo(s), please let us know.

Thanks again with warm regards,

Karen L. Grossman

President

Friends of Spy Pond Park

# FSPP Saturday Work Days

By Lally Stowell, Beautification Committee

The FSPP monthly Saturday Work Days will continue through October. We encourage all who enjoy Spy Pond Park to come and join our efforts to maintain and preserve this unique spot for the many families and visitors who come from all over throughout the year. We need your help pulling weeds and invasive plants, removing fallen branches, clearing the beaches and playground, and picking up trash. Our Work Days are scheduled for two hours, but any amount of time is greatly appreciated. A lot can be accomplished, even in a short amount of time. This is an opportunity to meet and work side by side with others who love the park and enjoy helping to keep it looking beautiful. It is also an opportunity to learn more about native and invasive plants.

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. All workers must fill out, sign and send us a waiver form (parents must sign for under-18s) available to download from our website. To sign up and to request community service credit afterwards contact [fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org](mailto:fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org). Please let us know if you're available on the rain date, too. We have a limited supply of tools, so if you have rakes, gloves and/or clippers, they would be greatly appreciated. Please bring water, too.

Below is a list of Work and Fun Days for 2022. They will be held on the Saturday mornings listed below with rain dates in the afternoon the next day. The hours in May, June, Sept., and Oct. are 9-11 a.m.; in July and August 8-10 a.m. We encourage you to come as often as possible for whatever length of time you can give. We also hope you will encourage your friends, family, members of your community groups, and colleagues at work to participate. High school students can earn community service credits. We look forward to having many eager volunteers work with us this year. For more information, contact Lally Stowell; [lallystowell@icloud.com](mailto:lallystowell@icloud.com).

## 2022 Remaining Work Day Schedule

July 23, 8-10 a.m. (rain date July 24, 1-3 p.m.)

Aug. 13, 8-10 a.m. (rain date Aug. 14, 1-3 p.m.)

Sept. 17, 9-11 a.m. (rain date Sept. 18, 1-3 p.m.)

Oct. 15, 9-11 a.m. (rain date Oct. 16, 1-3 p.m.)

Sept 24 Fun Day 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (rain date Sept 25 1-4 p.m.)

Fun Day involves children's activities in Spy Pond Park; It is 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 and send it to [fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org](mailto:fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org). Children below 18 years of age must have a parental signature to participate in Spy Pond Park Work & Fun Days.*

# Memorial Service for Wallace Williams

Wallace (Wally) Williams and his wife, Beverly (Bev), were volunteers at Spy Pond Park for several years. FSPP gave them a Good Citizen's Award and Citation for their many years of dedicated service to our organization and to the park. Wally died in January 2022 and a few FSPP members extended our condolences to Bev and her family at Keefe Funeral Home.

There was a memorial meeting, also streamed online, hosted by Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, that took place on Saturday, June 25, 2022, at 10:00 am in the Margaret Jewett Hall of the First Church Congregational at 11 Garden Street in Cambridge, MA 02138. Karen L. Grossman, FSPP President, represented FSPP to express our condolences and memories with Bev and Wally's friends and family at that service. Our memories of Wally's dedication to the environment and Spy Pond Park remains with us always.

*Editor's Note: FSPP sent out an email notification to our MailChimp list prior to the service.*

## Citation

*For your many years of dedication to  
Spy Pond Park in your roles as:*

*taker of meticulous minutes for 6 years as Recording  
Secretary for the Friends of Spy Pond Park,*

*writer of poems and articles for the FSPP Newsletter*

*faithful Beautification Committee team member,*

*tireless weeder, pruner, planter and hauler on  
Work Days, and*

*since you moved to Arlington, contributors to many  
improvement projects that have made Spy Pond Park  
the beautiful and welcoming place it has become for  
families and visitors who come from all over,*

*the Friends of Spy Pond Park  
is proud to present this  
Good Citizen Award*

*to*

*Beverly and Wallace Williams  
December 2, 2018*



# Spy Pond Snapper

By Kristina Conroy

(Sunday morning 6/5): If you were one of the many good Samaritans concerned about his plight on the dock, fear not: once the crowd dispersed, he calmly made his way off the dock and plopped into the water.

PHOTO BY KRISTINA CONROY



A big snapper walked to the dock,

PHOTO BY KRISTINA CONROY



onto the dock,

PHOTO BY KRISTINA CONROY



and plunged into the pond from the edge

# Tiger Scouts Pack #313 in Spy Pond

By Emily Kelly, tiger scout parent

At the May 21st Work Day, two first grader Tiger Scouts from Arlington's Cub Scout Pack #313 (<https://www.arlingtoncubscouts313.com/>) got muddy helping to clean up the pond as a community service activity. The Tigers and their parents raked mud and dead leaves from the pond edge, carefully picked out all the man-made debris by hand, and then carted clean muck into the woods where it will enrich the soil. We were all amazed at how many tiny pieces of plastic and other trash we found, and how stinky the muck was when we raked it up! The kids especially enjoyed exploring what they could rake in: "We lured a log to shore!" Thanks to FSPP for the opportunity to learn more about the pond's ecosystem and how important it is to care for it.

# Slow Down for Turtles

By Lauren Bonilla, Co-VP for Communication & Outreach

In mid-June, I heard a sharp "CRACK!" outside while cooking with the windows open. I looked out the window over my sink to see what had happened. In the middle of the road, there was a motionless turtle. A middle schooler walking down the street approached the turtle with curiosity and then ran away in horror with a hand over their face. I went outside to see if the turtle was still alive, but it was dead and "pretty mushed," according to my toddler, who wanted to investigate the scene with me. Fortunately, the turtle did not suffer for long, despite its tragic death.

The turtle was a medium-sized snapper that was likely on its way from its usual habitat in Spy Pond – just a couple hundred feet from the road – to a protected place in East Arlington to dig a nest and lay eggs. Snapping turtles are common to Spy Pond, as any frequent boater or fisherperson on the pond knows. However, they rarely travel beyond the water's edge, except during their breeding season in May and June. Motorists need to be extra cautious this time of year when driving on roads near Spy Pond, keeping an eye out for mature female snappers making their annual terrestrial appearances.

Although little of the turtle remains on the road, save for a flattened plate of carapace, I keep thinking about the turtle when I look out my kitchen window. The snapper likely lived a life nearly as long as my own and was about to create a new generation of Spy Pond turtles. It had emerged from the mud at the pond's bottom to find a sunny spot for its eggs, only to face an early death by humans who could learn a lesson from them to *slow down*.



# Spy Pond Trails Day 2022 May 7th, Our 16th year!

By Stroker Rogovin, Spy Pond Committee of Envision Arlington



A youthful volunteer at Spy Pond Trails Day was very enthusiastic about taking the coyote skull he found to his science class

## Weather.

50F, high sustained wind out of the NE. Scattered clouds, in and out of the sun.

## Attendance.

35 - 40 people (to be verified), including many teens and younger. Anecdotal info suggests roughly 3/4ths came from Arlington, many from on or near the pond, plus another quarter or so from further afield, including neighboring towns. Most attended in response to direct email, personal invitation, and/or notifications in newsletters (Arlington Land trust, Friends of Spy Pond Park, Kelwyn Manor, Mystic River Watershed Association, etc.). Agnes O'Donnell and Steve Ricci did a boffo job collecting names and contact info for future events, as well as ensuring that all participants signed liability waivers. Free drinks and snacks were readily dispensed by Reluctant Secretary, Brian Battuello.

## Projects.

Due to recent work along the path by Mass. DOT, many of the usual assignments went easier this year.

**Pruning.** Mal, Denny, and other AMC volunteers pruned the entire path from Lake St. to Pleasant St., plus all feeder trails down to the pond, and brushed-in erosion-prone areas to discourage foot traffic. This annual "routine maintenance" is reducing both the number and severity of "bootleg" access trails.

**Invasive Species.** Under Brad Barber's and Elaine Crowder's guidance, AMC folks and others hit the invasive



Brad Barber collected bags of invasive growth

species hard, removing dozens of trash-bags-worth of English Ivy, Bittersweet, Garlic Mustard, and other nasties. In past years we've also typically removed between 25 and 40 separate stations of poison ivy, some of them quite large; this year the count was virtually zero, most likely due to recent mitigation measures by the DOT.

**Litter.** We created another small mountain of trash bags from Rt. 2 road trash and leftover construction debris from the DOT project. Among the more unusual spoils were two animal skulls (coyote and raccoon)—thankfully no human remains.

**Plantings.** Last, but not least, the vast majority of dog-woods planted in 2019 to help control bank erosion appear to be thriving, if growing slowly. Thanks to Mass. DOT and the Appalachian Mountain Club for help funding this project.

All in all, the path is looking as good as it ever has, thanks to our volunteers and the Mass. Dept. of Transportation.



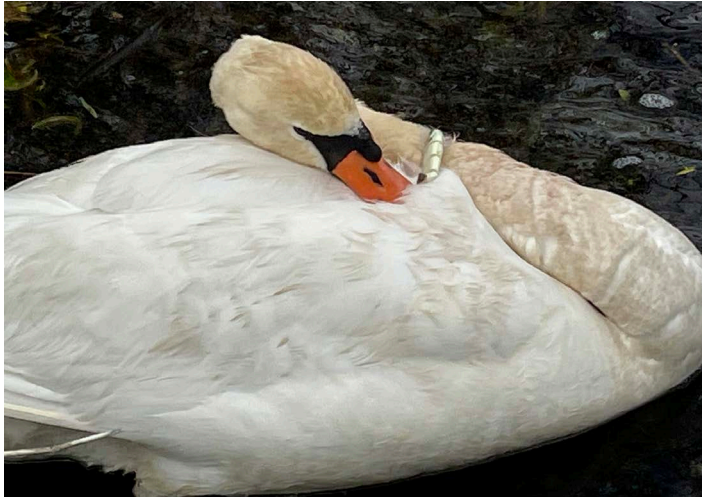
This youthful volunteer collected invasive plants to put in bags



# Swan Rescue

By Brian Battuello, Spy Pond Committee

Compiled by Karen L. Grossman, Friends of Spy Pond Park



Swan with fishing lure

On May 7 Ben Ferber saw a badly injured swan on his property's lawn on the shoreline of Spy Pond. Ben said, "The afternoon was quite an emotional rollercoaster. When I first saw the swan, she (he?) was clearly injured and distressed, barely moving for a long time with a fishing lure coming out of her beak; I thought maybe she had swallowed a hook and line. A little later it became clear that her neck was caught on a hook too; she couldn't fix it herself, and she wouldn't be able to eat, but it seemed like she could be saved. But how?"

See video: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kxgaTiP1Z6j1xCe1MWRoHaNBXugpOsNK>.

Aimee D'Onofrio, Ben's wife, reported that they made calls to Arlington Animal Control, Angell Memorial Veterinary Hospital, Tufts and Mass Wildlife, and to Joanne in Arlington who helps rehab. mammals. Aimee posted on Facebook for help/leads, too. She did talk to Tufts, but they were unable to take the bird because of avian flu and they don't do pickups, anyhow.

Noting the dire situation, thinking the swan probably would not live until more help would be available on Monday, Ben reached out to others to assist him in helping the swan. He contacted Brad Barber, Frances Ross and me and we all met at Ben's house. We strategized, surrounded the swan, and Brian and Frances trapped it under a blanket they brought and soothed it. Brad did the delicate, skillful surgery with thick leather gloves using his toolbox tools to remove the fishing hook lodged in the swan's neck while the rest of us took turns holding the swan down. Afterwards, the swan went straight to the water and swam away briskly with plenty of energy. We are pretty sure the swan was a recent visitor to the pond, and not the resident mute swans, one of which is currently on a nest.

See video: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kxgaTiP1Z6j1xCe1MWRoHaNBXugpOsNK>.

Thanks to everyone who responded to our email requests for help in the Kelwin Manor neighborhood. Lisa Charles sent special kudos to Ben, who saw the situation first and took matters into his own hands to find help. She said, "All of you who rolled up your sleeves are awesome." Ben responded by saying, "I want to express my deep gratitude to Brian, Frances, and especially Brad. Because of their gumption and can-do attitude, their caring and expert handling of the swan, and Brad's impressive surgical skills, this beautiful animal will continue to live and thrive. Wow!"

Kevin Brownwell, so happy with the swan's rescue, made some rousing comments after hearing of this experience, "My partner and I have long mulled over the idea of engaging the town government to see if some restrictions can be put in place on fishing in Spy Pond, especially with the barbaric type of hook that ended up in this poor bird's neck. This latest incident has made us decide we have to at least try and are going to start actively looking at what actions we might be able to take. If anyone shares similar aims or knows of similar efforts/allies on this topic, please reach out to me: [kevinbrownell@gmail.com](mailto:kevinbrownell@gmail.com). We are new to anything like this, but are willing to put in the time, effort, and money if needed." Beth Melofchik, [tankmadel@yahoo.com](mailto:tankmadel@yahoo.com) led a fishing line group started by Joe Connelly, Director of Parks and Recreation, that was active for a while and may get recharged by this story and more support.

Yes, all is well with this injured swan, but problems with wildlife encountering loose fishing lines and hooks will continue, while it seems that people fishing do not make adequate effort and take the time to retrieve them!



Frances Ross held the swan's neck, Brian Battuello and Ben Ferber held its body while Brad Barber operated to extract the hook lodged in its neck. It took teamwork to save the injured swan.



## Friends of Spy Pond Park next meetings

on  
**Sunday, July 17, 2022**  
**7:00 p.m., Zoom link TBA**  
&  
**Sunday, Sept. 18, 2022**  
**7:00 p.m., Zoom link TBA**

RSVP (optional) to 781-646-5990  
email [fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org](mailto:fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org)

## To join Friends of Spy Pond Park...

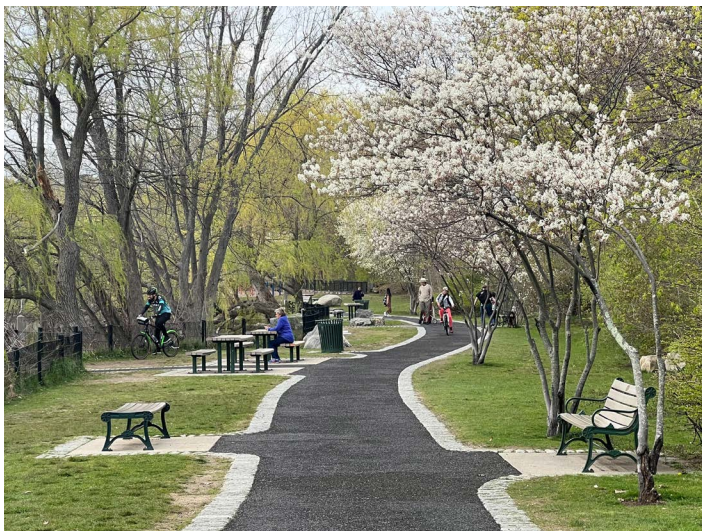
Send your annual dues (\$15 individual, \$25 household, \$5 low-income) to:  
FSPP, P.O. Box 1051, Arlington, MA 02474-0021  
For more information, call a Friends officer.

President: Karen L. Grossman	(781) 646-5990
General Vice-President: Open	
Treasurer: Sarah Zadova	(617) 782-3567
Recording Secretary: Megan Chrisman	(760) 604-8384
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VPs for Communication & Outreach:	
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Marshall McCloskey	(617) 548-9877
Chair for Publicity: Jenny Babon	(774) 253-6325
Publicity Committee: Open	
Beautification Committee:	
Adrienne Landry	
Lally Stowell	(781) 777-2759
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Photographer's Assistant: Open	
Post-processing: Mark Sandman	

Newsletter contributions and general comments can be sent to  
[fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org](mailto:fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org)

Friends of Spy Pond Park • <https://www.friendsofspypondpark.org> • P.O. Box 1051 • Arlington, MA 02474-0021

PHOTO BY MITHILESH SHARMA



People in Spy Pond Park in early spring enjoyed the blooming trees and the greening grass and leaf buds

## What Are You Doing on September 25?

You're invited to volunteer at the 20th (almost) annual Fun Day in Spy Pond Park.

Wouldn't you like to help some kids and adults enjoy nature and learn to care for the pond? Email coordinator Betsy Leondar-Wright at [betsy@classmatters.org](mailto:betsy@classmatters.org) or call 781-648-0630 to grab a role.

## CALLING MYSTIC YOUTH!

Join us for

### TEEN VOLUNTEER WEEK

<b>July 11</b>	<b>Remove Invasive Bittersweet</b> Join Medford CCSR student leader Maggie at Macdonald Park to remove invasive bittersweet vines! 10am - 12pm *Pre-registration required
<b>July 11</b>	<b>Clean up Chelsea Creek</b> Join GreenRoots ECO for a trash cleanup at 227 Marginal St., Boston MA 3pm - 5pm
<b>July 13/14</b>	<b>Canoe for a Cause</b> Hop in a canoe and help us remove aquatic invasive plants. 7/13 (2pm - 5pm) with GreenRoots ECO, 7/14 (4pm - 6pm) with Maggie and Jonah. *Pre-registration required
<b>July 14</b>	<b>Remove Invasive Bittersweet</b> Join Malden teens and 2021 MyRWA Volunteers of the Year Jasmine and Iris to remove invasive bittersweet vines from Macdonald Park! 9:30am - 11:30am *Pre-registration required

For more info & registration links visit [mysticriver.org/calendar](http://mysticriver.org/calendar)

**Mystic River**  
WATERSHED ASSOCIATION