

CRYSTAL LAKE

Preserving a Wildlife Habitat

Crystal Lake is home to many forms of wildlife. Looking from shore, you may see schools of fish swimming and Canada geese, hooded mergansers, and blue herons feeding in the water. Painted turtles often sun themselves on logs. You may see a muskrat surfacing in a cove.



FISHING GROUNDS

The lake has provided food for people for many centuries. Indigenous people walked to the lake from a network of trails in the area. Now, anglers catch the trout that the Commonwealth releases into the water every spring.



NATIVE PLANTS FOR BIODIVERSITY

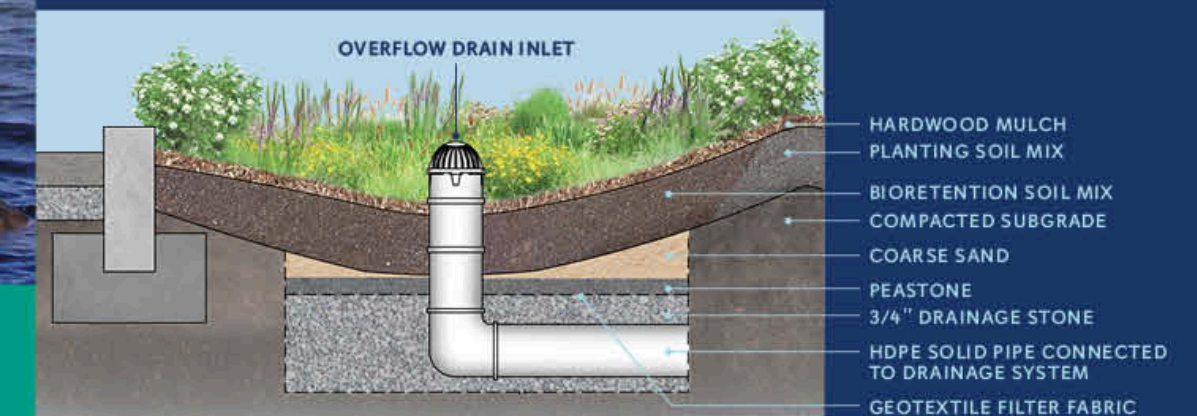
Native plants attract the insects and animals they evolved with and increase the biodiversity of the lake — and the city. Oaks, elms, and willows shade the coves. Fragrant clethra shrubs, lowbush blueberry, and sedges grow in the terraces and rain gardens. At the water's edge, you can see the groundnut vines and buttonbush that were prized by the early Massachusetts people.



Left to right:
Clethra alnifolia,
Lowbush blueberry,
Ground nut
(or Apios Americana),
Buttonbush.

THREATS TO WATER QUALITY

The health of the 27.5-acre lake has been threatened by runoff from the surrounding 55-acre watershed. Nitrogen and phosphorus from fertilizer and sodium chloride from road salt cause excess growth of blue-green algae, which consume oxygen from the water. Without adequate oxygen, the fish and plants can't live.



Restoration of Levingston Cove in 2023 introduced terracing and rain gardens (above) to filter storm water before it enters the lake.

IMPROVING WATER QUALITY

The City of Newton has improved the water quality by using less road salt, installing storm drain filters, and regularly sweeping the streets and cleaning out drains. Neighbors can help by using less fertilizer, minimizing litter, and planting native gardens.



City of Newton

LEARN MORE: www.newtonconservators.org

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