

**Vermont's Monthly Invasives Update 2009**  
August 2009

*The Monthly Invasives Update is distributed by The Vermont Chapter of Nature Conservancy's Wise on Weeds! program. If you would like to receive the newsletter, or have something to contribute, please contact Sharon Plumb at [splumb@tnc.org](mailto:splumb@tnc.org).*

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## SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

### 1. Species Spotlight: Wild Parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*)

No doubt about it, July is wild parsnip month. Phone calls and emails start flooding the office as people notice the 'yellow queen anne's lace' popping up in their fields or share horrific stories of how they or a dutiful family member went out to weed whack the plants and ended up with severe burns. A member of the carrot family (Apiaceae), the plant can drastically change the character and quality of a field or roadside. Grazing animals don't like it, and people can get badly burned by it.

The biennial plant forms a basal rosette the first year, and in year 2 or 3 will send up a flower stalk. Leaves look much like the flat parsley we grow in the garden: they are arranged in pairs along the stalk, are pinnately compound, oval, and hairless. Large yellow flowers grow in a loose umbel at the ends of each stalk. The plant dies and turns brown after the flowers turn to seed. Seeds can persist for more than four years.

**\*\* BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL WITH THIS PLANT\*\*.** The leaves, stems and flowers all contain a phytotoxic chemical that will cause a severe burn when it comes into contact with skin and is then exposed to sunlight. ***Wear long pants and a long sleeved shirt, gloves, and closed toed shoes.***



*Photo credit:* Ohio State Weed Lab Archive, The Ohio State University, Bugwood.org

For photos and more identification tips, go to [http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive\\_plants/weeds/wild-parsnip.pdf](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive_plants/weeds/wild-parsnip.pdf) and <http://www.invasive.org/species/subject.cfm?sub=6147> or [www.na.fs.fed.us](http://www.na.fs.fed.us).

### **Mechanical treatment:**

The USFS recommends hand pulling the plant when they first emerge. Or, use a power brush cutter to cut back large infestations before the plants flower. They may resprout.

### **Herbicide treatment:**

Glyphosate and triclopyr are reported to be effective when used to spot treat basal rosettes. To get certified or to obtain a list of herbicide contractors **Contact Matt Wood (802.828-3482 or [Matthew.Wood@state.vt.us](mailto:Matthew.Wood@state.vt.us)) at the Department of Agriculture.**

## **NOTEWORTHY NEWS**

### **2. The Nature Conservancy Receives USDA NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant**

The Vermont USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service has announced \$317,600 in Conservation Innovation Grants to Vermonters to fund 7 projects to develop and refine cutting-edge technologies and approaches to help farmers and forest land owners conserve and sustain natural resources. The Nature Conservancy will receive \$89,000 over three years to work with landowners in the Champlain Valley. The Conservancy will provide outreach and technical assistance to increase the number of landowners who take actions to improve bat habitat, habitat for aquatic and riparian species, and reduce invasive terrestrial plant infestations that affect forest productivity and the quality of wildlife habitats. To learn more go to:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/2009awards.html>

### **3. The Wise on Weeds! Program Receives Grant to Work with Horticultural Industry**

The WOW! program is pleased to announce it has received a two year grant from the Canaday Foundation. This generous support allows WOW! to work closely with nurseries, landscapers, and landscape architects to reduce the sale of invasive plants sold in Vermont. The program will be designed to encourage the sale of non invasives alternatives.

<http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/article/20090712/NEWS/90711010>

### **4. Frogbit Volunteers Pull 8 tons of aquatic nuisance!**

**European frog-bit (*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*)** is a free-floating plant that thrives in open marsh habitat and quiet backwaters, forming dense floating colonies. Lewis Creek Association received funding to pilot the first frog-bit removal effort in Vermont at the wetlands in Town Farm Bay near Point Bay Marina in Charlotte. Two full-time and four

part-time workers and many volunteers worked for 8 weeks hand harvesting the invasive aquatic plants. While developing removal methods with VT ANR, 7 tons of frog-bit were harvested in year one and are being composted for garden use. A prevention outreach campaign about this aggressively invasive plant (similar to waterchestnut) has begun around Lake Champlain. We hope to continue our work to contain this plant next year.

## **5. Green Mountain National Forest Pulls Miles of Chervil**

MaryBeth Deller, VIEPC member and Green Mountain National Forest botanist, reports that this year's chervil pull was a success. She says, "In June, we had a volunteer wild chervil pull on Forest Road 101 and we pulled about 1.8 miles of infestation. We had the good fortune to also have a VYCC crew in July, and they cleared another 1.8 miles, so we're gradually pushing the wild chervil down to Route 100."

## **6. Power plants? Invasive weeds might produce electricity Quest for current in weeds By Joel Banner Baird, Free Press Staff Writer -- July 12, 2009**

WEST BRIDPORT -- Electricity just might be wrung from these otherwise discarded weeds. Elegant in theory, the experiment in its early stages is loud and ugly.

<http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/artikkel?NoCache=1&Dato=99999999&Kategori=EVENT03&Lopenr=399990020&Ref=AR>

## **7. Plants Beauty Belies Danger Wild parsnip produces skin searing sap By Joel Banner Baird, Free Press Staff Writer**

<http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/artikkel?NoCache=1&Dato=99999999&Kategori=NEWS02&Lopenr=399990021&Ref=AR>

## **8. Chicago bans 14 invasive plants**

Invasive plants, with no natural enemies, like to take over -- often at the expense of local habitats and the creatures they support. The City of Chicago is fighting back, banning the sale and possession of 14 plants within city limits that are classified as invasive.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/classified/realestate/advice/chi-0719-garden-invasivejul19,0,887851.story>

## **9. Predators battle bugs, become pests themselves**

Predators battle bugs, become pests themselves By SUDHIN THANAWALA (AP) SAN FRANCISCO — Imported insects have been deployed as foot soldiers in the fight against invasive bugs and plants that cause billions of dollars in damage each year. But some of those imports are proving to be pests themselves that upset the balance of nature and threaten native species.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hTeXCZH0Izg7FqWBADcbpJNSq94AD99IV8HO3>

## **10. Sunlight transforms phragmite toxin**

By Molly Murray. The News Journal . July 22, 2009

LEWES -- In the world of plants, phragmites is the master of defense -- a super weed that can kill off rivals with a toxin secreted by its roots.

But a University of Delaware research team has found that the toxin is even more destructive than originally suspected -- thanks to a spinoff chemical created when the toxin is exposed to ultraviolet sunlight.

<http://www.delmarvanow.com/article/20090722/NEWS01/907220408>

## **11. Fungus Tapped to Take on Kudzu**

Kudzu, "The Vine that Ate the South," could meet its match in a naturally occurring fungus that Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists have formulated as a biologically based herbicide.

By one estimate, kudzu spreads at the rate of 150,000 acres annually, easily outpacing the use of herbicide spraying and mowing, as well increasing the costs of these controls by \$6 million annually.

But in Stoneville, Miss., ARS plant pathologist Doug Boyette and colleagues are testing a fungus named *Myrothecium verrucaria*, which infects kudzu with an astonishing speed of its own. In fact, the fungus works so quickly that kudzu plants sprayed with it in the morning start showing signs of damage by mid-afternoon, according to Boyette, with the ARS Southern Weed Science Research Unit in Stoneville.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr/2009/090716.htm>

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

### **12. Wanted: Reports of private and public lands invaded by Japanese and Common barberry, Burning Bush and Norway Maple**

The Vermont Invasive Exotic Plant Committee (VIEPC) is conducting research to determine whether to add more species to the Vermont Quarantine Rule. As part of its research, the committee seeks documented sightings of naturalized burning bush, barberry, and Norway Maple on private and/or public lands. If any of these plants have escaped cultivation on your property, or on a property that you know about, please use the attached form to document their presence. If you are reporting on private land, seek landowner permission before submitting the form. The form takes *only* 5 minutes to fill out. Please submit data sheets to [splumb@tnc.org](mailto:splumb@tnc.org) or Sharon Plumb, The Nature Conservancy, 27 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602.

**13. Get outside and pull invasives with The Nature Conservancy and Pull it Up!  
Contact Becca Jordan at [rjordan@tnc.org](mailto:rjordan@tnc.org) for more information.**

- August 3, 9:30-3, Pherrins River, Morgan, VT
- August 10, 9:30-3, LaPlatte River Marsh Natural Area, Shelburne, VT

**14. Celebrate the Lake! Make Samuel De proud! Pull water chestnut with some of Vermont's most charming people**

Help The Nature Conservancy control the invasive water chestnut in southern Lake Champlain. The plants are hand-pulled from canoes. This is a great opportunity to canoe for free and visit and learn about wetlands in Southern Lake Champlain. Canoes and refreshments are provided.

*July 28, Aug 6, 11, 13, 20, 22, 25, and 27. 9:00am - 3:00pm*

Workdays meet at The Nature Conservancy Office 115 Main Road, West Haven, VT  
Please sign up a day or two beforehand. Contact Stephanie Stahl 802-265-8645 x27;  
[sstahl@tnc.org](mailto:sstahl@tnc.org)

**15. Burlington Parks & Rec Invasive Plant Removal Program**

This exciting program is designed to introduce outdoor enthusiasts, property owners and gardeners to the most prominent invasive plants in Burlington. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about invasive plants, identify them in the field and remove them. All removal session will take place in the field. Field conditions can vary and participants should dress appropriately in long pants, sturdy shoes and gloves. Water bottles and bug spray are recommended. Tools will be provided. **All sessions are free but pre-registration is required. Contact Lisa Coven at [LCoven@ci.Burlington.vt.us](mailto:LCoven@ci.Burlington.vt.us) for more information**

Date: August 8th, 9:30-11:30

Location: McKenzie Park

**16. Wanted: People to Collect Native Seeds**

The Green Mountain National Forest has formed a partnership with several other agencies to develop a sustainable supply of native seed mixes with local genotypes that can be used in restoration projects across the Adirondacks and non-coastal VT, NH, and ME. The group is currently looking for volunteers to collect seeds of 12 different species from any of these locations. Seeds will ultimately be given to a grower to multiply them and create seed mixes. More information is available at their website: <http://nenativeseeds.googlepages.com/home>

**LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

**17. Asian Long-horned Beetle/Emerald Ash Borer Workshops**

The Asian Longhorned beetle (ALB) threatens the health of a variety of hardwood trees in North America, including sugar maple. Native to eastern Asia, it has been found in New York City, Chicago, southern New Jersey, and in 2008, in the Worcester, MA region, 60 miles south of the Vermont border. The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), another pest native to eastern Asia, has been identified as the cause of widespread ash decline and mortality in southeast Michigan and Windsor, Ontario. It has been detected in eleven states, including Chambly, Quebec, Ontario, less than 40 miles north of the Vermont border. It feeds on all true species of ash, including white, black, and green ash. These insects have led to the death and decline of millions of hardwood trees across the U.S., and have cost billions of dollars in eradication and outreach efforts. Early detection is key to stopping the spread of these destructive forest pests.

**Come to a workshop and learn how to identify these pests (and the trees they attack), and what to do if you see one. Workshops are FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. Light refreshments will be served.**

- **Wednesday, July 29, 5:30 – 8:30 pm. Ethan Allen Homestead, Burlington.**
- **Wednesday, August 5th, 2009, 5:30pm – 8:30pm. Brattleboro High School Cafeteria, Brattleboro, VT**

**Contact Amanda Priestley at 802.522.0951 or [amanda.priestley@state.vt.us](mailto:amanda.priestley@state.vt.us)**

## **17. Walk in the Woods Series: West Rutland Town Forest**

**Dodd Farm Block, West Rutland Town Forest  
August 8, 2009, 9:00 AM - Noon**

Vermont Woodlands Association would like to announce its next tour in their Walk in the Woods series. For more information on any of the tours, please call 802-747-7900 or visit [www.vermontwoodlands.org](http://www.vermontwoodlands.org).

This walk will start at the Recreation Area at the end of Fairview Ave. in W. Rutland and continue to an area on the adjacent town forest that was clear-cut in the winter of 2007. Discussion topics will include the challenges and opportunities of managing forestland for multiple objectives. Specific topics will include the creation of early successional habitat through clear-cutting, the concept of planting desirable tree species following a harvest, management of invasive species, and other pertinent management issues. **The hike to the timber harvest area will take about 20 minutes and there is a fairly steep section of trail.** You should bring: water, good footwear, pants are recommended, and lots of questions! This event will be held rain or shine so dress for the weather!! Sponsored by Vermont Woodlands and Vermont Tree Farm Program.

**Directions:**

From the South: Route 7 into Rutland. Take left onto Rte 4W to Exit 6. Merge to left lane and take left at stop light onto Main St./VT-4A. Take left onto Clarendon Ave. (VT-133). Go approx. 0.6 miles to Fairview Avenue (there is a small sign for the Rec. Department). Follow to the end - road ends at the parking lot.

From the North: Head north on US Route 7S into Rutland City. Turn right at Route 4A/West Street. Continue on Business Route 4. Continue on Rutland Road/US-4 into W. Rutland. Turn left onto Clarendon Ave. (VT-133). Continue as above.

### **18. Invasive Plant Management for Road Crews Workshops**

Learn why invasive species are a threat to Vermont's natural resources, local economies, and human health; learn how to identify weeds in the field based on plant form and habitat; and learn how to reduce the spread of invasive terrestrial plants through best management practices for road crews. Credit: This is a 4 hour Environmental Workshop under the new Vermont Local Roads Scholar Program. Instructors: Sharon Plumb - Coordinator of The Nature Conservancy's Wise on Weeds! Outreach and Education Program and Craig Dusablon - Landscape Coordinator for the Vermont Agency of Transportation Fee: \$10 Go to <http://www.vermontlocalroads.org/> to register and for more information. One remaining workshop: August 26, Marsh Billings National Historical Park, Woodstock.

### **19. Invasive Plant Conference in PA August 11 – 1 Mid-Atlantic Exotic Pest Plant Council Go to <http://www.ma-eppc.org/> for more information.**

Topics include: White-tailed Deer interactions; Effects of Natural Disturbance; Anthropological and Ecological Aspects of Plant Distributions; Invasive Medicinal and Culinary Herbs; Predicting Vulnerability of Areas to Invasiveness; Invasive Risk Potential of Biofuel Crops; rooftop native plant garden tour; The Three R's of Why Invasive Species Control is Restoration; Prioritizing Treatment Sites with Limited Resources; Hiring a Firm to Control Invasive Species: How to Write an Effective Business Contract; Establishing and Enforcing a "Do-Not-Plant List"; Within a Homeowners Association-governed Community and more.

<http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/default.aspx?EventID=726341>

### **20. 2nd Annual Rooftop to River Rain Garden Contest: "Gardening to Absorb the Storm"**

A rain garden is a bowl shaped garden designed to capture and absorb stormwater runoff (rainfall from a roof, parking lot, or other impervious surface) into the ground after a storm. It can also be a great way to remove invasives. Design a garden and enter a contest! Registration is FREE and open until August 15th. Register early to attend rain garden workshops and receive free technical assistance. Gardens will be judged in early September. To enter, your rain garden must be located in the Lake Champlain Basin ( [http://www.lcbp.org/Atlas/PDFmaps/nat\\_political.pdf](http://www.lcbp.org/Atlas/PDFmaps/nat_political.pdf)). Six winners will be

chosen based on predetermined categories.

Registered rain garden contestants will receive: 1) An invitation to FREE rain garden workshops; 2) The Vermont Rain Garden Manual; and 3) FREE on-site technical guidance from a local expert. For information about workshops and technical assistance, contact Emma Melvin at [emelvin@uvm.edu](mailto:emelvin@uvm.edu) or 802.859.3086 x340. For further details about registration and the Contest, in general, contact Ashley Lidman at [Ashley.Lidman@vt.nacdnet.net](mailto:Ashley.Lidman@vt.nacdnet.net) or 802-865-7895 x104 or visit <http://www.vacd.org/winooski/>.

This project was funded in part by a Vermont Watershed Grant. For more information, or to register, visit: [http://vacd.org/winooski/winooski\\_raingarden\\_contest.shtml](http://vacd.org/winooski/winooski_raingarden_contest.shtml)

## **RESOURCES**

### **21. Check out this nifty new site developed by the University of MD. It includes a diagnostic tool to help you figure out your pest based on symptoms.**

The University of Maryland's Pest Threats Web Site is up and running. Check it out at: <http://pestthreats.umd.edu/>

### **22. Regional Pollinator Guides Available**

A new series of ecoregional planting guides has been created to help farmers and ranchers, land managers, and gardeners select plants to increase the number of pollinators in their area. It is estimated that animal pollinators--bees, butterflies, birds, bats--are needed for the reproduction of 80% of flowering plants and one-third of human food crops. Each of us depends on these industrious pollinators to provide us with a wide range of foods we eat. In addition, pollinators are part of the intricate web that supports the biological diversity in natural ecosystems.

Unfortunately, pollinators are declining. They are threatened by habitat loss, disease, and the excessive and inappropriate use of pesticides. A number of pollinator species are at risk.

This series was created by the Pollinator Partnership (P2), to which the Forest Service is affiliated, along with several other federal agencies. These 28 guides are tailored to specific ecoregion provinces in the U.S., as mapped by the Forest Service, and are available for downloading, free of charge, at <http://www.pollinator.org/guides.htm>. They have an Ecoregion Locator using your zip code.

## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **23. August 1 deadline for NPS Rivers & Trails Assistance**

Access RFP online at <http://www.nps.gov/rtca>

National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program  
54 Elm Street  
Woodstock, VT 05091  
802-457-3368 ext 21  
[www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca)