

Vermont's Monthly Invasives Update 2009

July 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.

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SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

1. Species Spotlight: Japanese Barberry

Japanese barberry invades Vermont's forests and fields. It is **easy to see in August and September** when its red berries are most colorful.

Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) is sold in many different ornamental varieties such as 'Aurea' with gold leaves or 'Crimson Pygmy' with purple leaves. Though these cultivars look different from the green-leaved Japanese barberry that is found in forests, studies show that these ornamental varieties are all capable of producing offspring with green leaves.

Japanese barberry infestations have been found throughout much of Vermont. Infestations can cover dozens of acres, reducing the regeneration of native trees and shrubs and reducing the presence of native ferns and wildflowers.

Good alternatives for barberry: When possible, select a Vermont Native. Highbush blueberry, Black Chokeberry, Common Winterberry, Silky Dogwood, Inkberry, and Meadowsweet make landscape plantings. Check out www.beplantwise.org for more alternatives.

Go to www.vtinvasiveplants.org or <http://www.invasive.org/species/weeds.cfm> for more information.

Mechanical treatment:

Digging out barberry plants will cause soil disturbance and should only be applied in areas that you intend to replant.

The Weed Wrench™ (right) is a handy tool that helps pull out a plant's entire root system in one easy step

Cut stem: cut each of the many stems at their base. If possible, after cutting stumps in the fall, wrap a few layers of burlap or thick plastic over the stumps and tie tightly with twine or rope. Check covered stumps periodically to cut or recover any new growth.

Herbicide treatment:

In the fall, cut and treat each stump with 25% glyphosate solution. For heavy infestations, hire a contractor. **Contact Matt Wood (802.828-3482 or Matthew.Wood@state.vt.us) at the Department of Agriculture for an updated list of herbicide contractors.**

NOTEWORTHY NEWS

2. 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 or Sharon Plumb, The Nature Conservancy, 27 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602.

3. June issue of Scientific American article, “Weed-Whacking Herbicide Proves Deadly to Human Cells”

An article in Scientific American reveals that the inactive ingredients in glyphosate based products can be harmful to human cells. While the EPA considers glyphosate to have low toxicity when used at the recommended doses, recent studies reveal that one specific inert ingredient, polyethoxylated tallowamine, or POEA, damages human cells.

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=weed-whacking-herbicide-p>

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

4. 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 Chamby, 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.

Workshop dates and locations:

- **Wednesday, July 15, 5:30 pm – 7 pm. New England Tropical Conservatory, Woodstock, VT. For more information or to register contact Shelly Stiles at the Bennington County Conservation District, 802.442.2275 or bccd@sover.net**

- **Wednesday, July 22, 9 am – 1 pm. Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park Woodstock, VT. Contact Kyle Jones at 802.457.3368 or kyle_jones@nps.gov**
- **Wednesday, July 29, 5:30 – 8:30 pm. Ethan Allen Homestead. Contact Amanda Priestley at 802.522.0951 or amanda.priestley@state.vt.us**

5. 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. July 22 Ferrisburgh; August 26 Woodstock.

6. 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 pant 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.

Who Should Attend:

- Nursery and landscape professionals
- Natural resource specialists
- Managers of parks, preserves and conservation districts
- Invasive plant management and restoration specialists
- Extension agents, environmental educators and garden and outdoor writers Public and botanical garden managers and supervisors
- Researchers, students and gardeners Golf course and Recreational Land Managers
- Volunteers who want to know more

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

7. Get outside with The Nature Conservancy and Pull it Up! Contact Becca Jordan at rjordan@tnc.org for more information.

- July 28, 9:30-3, White River Ledges Natural Area, Pomfret, VT
- July 30, 9:30-3, Maidstone Bends Natural Area, Maidstone, VT
- August 3, 9:30-3, Pherrins River, Morgan, VT
- August 10, 9:30-3, LaPlatte River Marsh Natural Area, Shelburne, VT

8. 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 for more information

Date: July 11th, 9:30am-11:30am

Location: McKenzie Park

Date: Saturday July 18th 9:30-11:30

Location: Leddy Park

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

Location: McKenzie Park

9. Volunteers Needed to Assist in European Frogbit Management

The Lewis Creek Association (LCA) is launching an 8-week intensive management program to control European Frogbit (*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*) in the Town Farm Bay Wetlands, in Charlotte, VT. Frogbit, like many aquatic nuisance species, has been documented as decreasing populations of native aquatic plants and potentially damaging fish spawning habitat. For several years, concerned citizens in Charlotte have been volunteering their time pulling frogbit each summer. From their initial progress, LCA with funding from the Lake Champlain Basin Program and VT State Clean and Clear Program, is launching a pilot control project in the wetland to reduce the frogbit population and document the effectiveness of a hand-pulling operation. The project's coordinators, Sue Smith and Sara Kuebbing, have hired a crew to manually hand-pull frogbit from June 1, 2009 – July 24, 2009. But, they are still looking for additional help to hand-harvest frogbit!

Volunteer dates:

Wednesdays, July 15, 22 10:00am to 12:00pm

Saturdays, June 20, 27, July 18, – 1:00pm to 3:00pm

Please contact us for more details and are interested in helping out. If you have a group who is interested in volunteering, additional volunteer dates can be arranged. Sue Smith: ssmith@gmavt.net and Sara Kuebbing: sara.e.Kuebbing@gmail.com

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

11. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR BIOLOGICAL CONTROL OF PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE for CT LANDOWNERS

The University of Connecticut Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have recently established a partnership agreement to provide financial and technical assistance to control purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), a non-native invasive plant in Connecticut. Purple loosestrife grows and establishes quickly, decreasing the abundance of native species and reducing biological diversity in wetlands, meadows, and other natural areas. Eligible participants will be trained to rear beneficial *Galerucella* beetles locally and introduce the beetles onto purple loosestrife to reduce populations of the invasive plant through biological control.

This is a great opportunity to help control a troublesome invasive species. Participants must be private landowners (including land trusts, etc.) with purple loosestrife on their land OR a potential Beetle Farmer interested in working with a non-State or non-Municipal landowner in Connecticut.

If you are interested in participating in this exciting new opportunity to control purple loosestrife, please contact Donna Ellis [email: donna.ellis@uconn.edu; phone (860) 486-6448] to be pre-screened **as soon as possible**. Beetles will be reared and released in 2010. To be considered for the available funding, you will need to be pre-screened and then fill out the application request paperwork with NRCS by **Friday, July 17, 2009**.

UConn Integrated Pest Management: www.hort.uconn.edu/ipm
CT Invasive Plant Working Group (CIPWG): www.hort.uconn.edu/cipwg