

RESOURCES

CT Invasive Plant Working Group -
www.hort.uconn.edu/CIPWG/

Invasive Plant Atlas of New England -
<http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/ipane/>

National Invasive Species Info. Center -
www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov

CT Department of Environmental Protection
860-424-3000

Also see - Connecticut Public Act - 03-136

Contact FRCC for
more information, workshops,
and
expert advice



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Non-Native Invasive Plant Species

A Resident's Guide to
Invasive Plant Species on
and around the
Farmington River

What are Non-native Invasive Plants?

A non-native, invasive plant is one that has been introduced to an area outside of its native habitat. Invasive plants come from other countries, farms, construction sites, and home gardens.

Invasive plants alter the natural landscape of the area they have entered. In the new area, the plant can grow unrestricted due to a lack of native predators.

WHAT MAKES AN INVASIVE PLANT, INVASIVE?

There are certain criteria that a plant must meet in order for the plant to be considered an invasive plant:

- Non-indigenous to Connecticut
- Able to out-compete native species
- Exist in many populations outside of the managed artificial habitats
- Spread quickly over large areas
- Spread or jump landscape gaps from site of introduction
- Widespread or common in a region

WHY ARE INVASIVE PLANTS BAD FOR THE FARMINGTON RIVER AREA?

Non-native invasive plant species have many characteristics that make them dangerous to the Farmington River area.

Some plants have nitrogen-fixing nodules that trap nitrogen in the soil. This modifies the soil so that native plants cannot grow. In addition, invasive plants use resources, such as water, sunlight, and nutrients that native plants need to survive.

Climbing plants, such as Oriental Bittersweet, grow on native plants and end up choking them and other plants out.

As non-native plant species increase in the Farmington River area, the amount of native plant and animal species will decrease. Due to the loss of habitat and food sources, native animals and birds will decrease in areas where non-native plants have "invaded."

STATE LISTED NON-NATIVE INVASIVE PLANTS

- Shrub Honeysuckle
- Autumn Olive
- Black Locust
- Coltsfoot
- Burning Bush
- Forget-me-not
- Garlic Mustard
- Goutweed
- Japanese Barberry
- Japanese Knotweed
- Pachysandra
- Mugwort
- Multiflora Rose
- Narrowleaf Bittercress
- Oriental Bittersweet

Shrub Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica* Thunb.): Although beautiful, honeysuckle (in shrub form) is highly invasive. It can have white, light pink, or dark pink flowers.



Autumn Olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata* Thunb.): This shrub is best identified by its silver-green leaves. Autumn Olive is a nitrogen fixing plant.



Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia* L.): This tree has thorns on the younger branches and when flowering, the white flowers hang in clusters. Its seeds spread by pods and the plant can grow in thickets by root suckering.



Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*): Although many people have planted this around their homes, the seeds can spread and create thickets that displace native vegetation.



Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*): This weed is mostly seen on roadsides in fairly dense populations. Because of these dense populations, native vegetation and diversity decreases.



Goutweed (*Aegopodium podagraria* L.): Although ornamental in gardens, the ability for goutweed (or Bishop's Goutweed) to spread is very high. It crowds out native species and sunlight.



Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii* DC): This ornamental shrub is extremely shade tolerant. This allows for its rapid spreading along with the spread of its seeds by birds.



Japanese Knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum* Sieb. & Zucc.): This weed is highly invasive near streams and rivers, making it important to control around the Farmington.

Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora* Thunb.): This flowering shrub creates an impenetrable natural barrier against humans, livestock and wildlife.



Oriental Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus* Thunb.): This woody vine is easy to spot; it grows on top of other vegetation like trees and bushes. Continued growth chokes out the plants beneath it.



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Management of non-native invasive plant species is as simple as maintaining your home garden. The actions to remember about removing an invasive plant from your property are:

- Try to eradicate before the plant sets seed or fruit.
- Be careful of where you dispose of the plants! Put them in a black trash bag and throw them in your trash rather than the compost pile!
- Follow through with what you have done. Check the areas once a week for new growth.
- Save as many native plants as possible.
- Contain the spread by removing satellite populations first.
- Do not use herbicides if you are near a water source! (The chemicals can pollute the water and harm water-based habitats).
- Replant native species in areas that you have removed invasive plants.
- Be sure that what you are removing is invasive! If you are unsure, contact an expert!