

NEWSLETTER

Since introducing various “invasive” plants on my farm over 25 years ago and having gardened and farmed organically for the last 40 or so years, I have developed a strategy to help control, not eradicate, these invaders from “alien lands”.

Here is a short history of how I arrived at this point. Many years ago when I managed several bee hives, a respected apiarist, Albert Thomas, who operated a honey and bee supply store in Indianapolis, recommended that I plant bush honeysuckle as an “excellent” source of nectar for honeybees. About the same time, I had agreed to a farm and wildlife management plan with the local Brown County Agricultural, Stabilization and Conservation Service, ASCS, office. ASCS recommended that I plant several varieties of lespedeza (Asian) for both wildlife and erosion control. They also informed me that the state DNR nursery at Vallonia had “wildlife packets” consisting of 25 autumn olive and 25 bush honeysuckles at a very reasonable price. The State Wildlife Biologist also recommended that I plant these Asian beauties, which I gladly did! At that time, I inquired as to the “possibility” that these plants might somehow spread by seed or bird dispersal. Both the ASCS and wildlife biologist denied that this was a possibility!

When I had my first pond built ASCS said that it was necessary to plant crown vetch to control erosion on both the dam and other disturbed areas. Following their recommendation, I planted this legume that also turned out to be invasive. Multiflora rose was already on the property from previous landowners.

Today, I am reaping the “benefits” of my past actions to improve habitat for wildlife and stop erosion! Here is my approach to solving the problem that I created many years ago: First, I located all of the older bush honeysuckle and autumn olive shrubs, many of which were 10-15 inches in diameter, and used a chain saw to saw them off near the ground. The plants with a smaller diameter were pruned near the ground, the goal being to prevent these shrubs from forming any new seeds. The 2nd and 3rd years, the same plants were pruned both spring and fall as they as they began to sprout. Honeysuckle and autumn olive stay green well into November and they emerge very early, sometimes in March. This characteristic helps me to locate them during the colder months, as they are the only green plants in the woods and fields. Bush honeysuckle can be pulled early in the spring if the ground is wet and the stem is less than 2 inches in diameter. Pull very slowly and steadily in order to get all of the roots as they spread some distance from the plant. Don’t try this with autumn olive unless it is very small. Gradually, these invasives will lose some of their vigor and will be replaced by native plants such as elderberry, wild jewelweed, pokeweed, spicebush and young tree saplings such as red maple, sumac and sassafras.

Over the last few years I have been planting native shrubs such as pawpaw, persimmon, hazelnut, ninebark, and crabapple in infested areas. About 50% of the native shrubs have survived the recent droughts. The crown vetch has spread into some of my pastureland but is not a major problem if mowed annually. This actually improves the soil and provides additional protein to the hay.

Locating and pruning back invasives provides good exercise and keeps me aware of what’s going on in my forests and pastures. Good luck in your invasive species control efforts!

Dave Richards
Board Member
Brown County Native Woodlands Project.

Mission

Our mission is to protect the forests of the Brown County Hills from the devastating effects of invasive plant species through education, training, and eradication of non-native invasive plants.

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INVASIVE PLANTS PRIME TIME - ORIENTAL BITTERSWEET

Anyone who drives through our southern states is stunned by mature trees, buildings and even abandoned vehicles enveloped in the green cloak of kudzu. Kudzu is the classic example of a deliberately introduced, exotic plant whose original function was to control erosion along roadsides. This decision went awry with a disastrous results. The plant is out of control. Many of us are surprised when we learn that kudzu grows in Brown County as well as in many other counties in Indiana, and even into Michigan. The situation in Indiana is being closely monitored and control efforts are ongoing.

The experience with kudzu illustrates what may happen when an exotic plant settles into a new environment without the natural controls that keeps it in check in its home land - Japan, in the case of kudzu.



One of Brown County's favorite fall plants is Bittersweet, *Celastrus scandens*, with its clusters of bright orange orbs that dangle tantalizingly from vines that may reach the tops of tall trees. For as long as settlers have inhabited our county, as well as counties in 37 other states, bittersweet fruit, within reach, has been cut and used for decoration.

In the 1860s, a confusing look-alike was introduced as an ornamental plant - Asian or oriental bittersweet, *Celastrus orbiculatus*, native in Korea, China and Japan. It escaped cultivation and naturalized. It outcompetes the species that has grown in North America historically.

Both vines are woody, perennial plants. Because they are similar in many ways, it is difficult for most of us to tell the native from the interloper, but there are distinct differences. The best way to determine whether you have the native or the nonnative species is to check where the blossoms bloom and the fruit forms on the vine. American bittersweet produces flowers (and fruits) in single, terminal clusters at the tips of the stems. Oriental bittersweet is a prolific fruiter

with lots and lots of fruit clusters emerging at many points along the stem.

Unlike American bittersweet, oriental bittersweet grows vigorously and climbs over and smothers vegetation which may die from excessive shading or breakage. It can weaken mature trees by girdling the trunk. Left unchecked, it forms an impenetrable thicket and becomes a pure stand in forests.

In Brown County, oriental bittersweet infests forest edges, woodlands and fields, particularly those suffering some form of land disturbance. While often found in more open, sunny sites, its tolerance for shade allows oriental bittersweet to invade forested areas. (Unfortunately, hybridization of the two occurs, making identification more difficult. Before using control methods, be cautious lest the native bittersweet becomes the target.)



Many of us buy wreaths and other fall decorations that include sprigs of bittersweet berries. If, at the end of the season, you plan to discard the berries, and if you question whether the fruit is from the invasive rather than the native variety, discard them with your trash in a plastic bag. Putting the seeds or branches of oriental bittersweet in a compost or brush pile could accidentally introduce an invasive species to your property.

To learn more about this exotic, invasive plant, and others, visit the website of the Brown County Native Woodlands Project, <http://bcnwp.org>, where there are excellent links to more information. Or call The Nature Conservancy, 988-0246.

Find out how you can make a difference and help protect the trees, shrubs, flowers, mushrooms, insects, birds and mammals that we love in the forests that make our Brown County so special.

Ruth Ann Ingraham
Chair
Brown County Native Woodlands Project

JAPANESE KNOTWEED REMOVAL BY HERBICIDE INJECTION



Those of you who have attempted Japanese knotweed removal in your yards can testify to the fact that the antagonist in this backyard battle is no ordinary weed. Japanese knotweed removal is nighmarish enough without being in the dark as to the options available to you. The purpose of this short piece is to inform you of one option for removing Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*.) that is not widely known.

For more, http://landscaping.about.com/od/weedsdiseases/qt/remove_knotweed.htm .

BECOME A WEED WATCHER!!

Take an active roll in the fight against invasives in Southern Indiana. Fill out and submit this form to become a Weed Watcher, <http://www.sicwma.org/Become-a-Weed-Watcher-.html> Your involvement is critical to the success of the Southern Indiana Cooperative Weed Management Area (SICWMA). The SICWMA's mission is to Project Restore, and Enhance Southern Indiana's landscapes by coordinating efforts to Identify, Prevent, and Control invasive species. For more information visit, <http://www.sicwma.org>.

HOOSIER MOUNTAIN BIKERS HELP CONTROL JAPANESE STILTGRASS

Japanese stiltgrass is a non-native invasive plant that spreads quickly to form large patches, outcompeting and displacing native plants. Its seeds are dispersed by water, hikers, and vehicles. Mountain bikers can also spread the invasive grass, but they've also been helping to fight it.

The Hoosier Mountain Bike Association (HMBA), in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and the Brown County Native Woodlands Project, have been battling Japanese stiltgrass in Brown County State Park.

"Natural resource protection is part of the Hoosier Mountain Bike Association's mission statement," said HMBA president Paul Arlinghaus. "In addition to its financial help, HMBA is committing our volunteers to the fight against invasive species."



HMBA members have participated in several workdays to combat the stiltgrass. The Conservancy has been helping with the actual treatment of stiltgrass and providing equipment. The Conservancy has also helped to train and educate the members on the proper use of herbicide to kill the stiltgrass in heavily infested areas.

As of early September, volunteers sprayed 526 gallons of herbicide and donated 149 hours to this project.

INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL WORKSHOP

Purdue University, Forestry & Natural Resources and the Southern Indiana Cooperative Weed Management Area are sponsoring a workshop for landowners, land managers, and people who care about our wild places. The workshop will be held at the Southern Indiana Purdue Agricultural Center (SIPAC) near Cuzco, on the north shore of Patoka Lake. The workshop is free but registration would be appreciated. Click [HERE](#) to download a copy of the registration form.

October 4th, 7-9pm

- Exotic invasive plants – those coming soon, new, and here to stay, their identification, ecology, and impacts.
- Exotic invasive plant management strategies for landowners.
- Tactics – specific cultural techniques and herbicides for controlling some exotic invasive plants.
- Assistance available to landowners.
- Cooperative Weed Management Areas – working together to save Indiana’s wild places.



October 8th, 9am - noon

- Field demonstration of invasive plant control methods

For information contact:

Ron Rathfon, Extension Forester
 Purdue University
 Dept. of Forestry & Natural Resources
 812-678-5049, ronr@purdue.edu

INVASIVE SPECIES TRAINING AND ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS WORKSHOP

October 5, 2011

Martell Forest-Wright Forestry Center, West Lafayette, IN

Registration \$25.00

This program, presented by the West-Central Indiana Cooperative Weed Management Area, will provide presentations and field demonstrations on Identification and management of invasive plant species threatening our woodlands and other terrestrial habitats in Indiana, and the implications for woodlands and wildlife if these plants are allowed to spread.

8:30-9:00	Registration
9:00-9:15	Introduction by Bob Eddleman
9:15-10:15	Invasive Plant Identification by Lenny Farlee and Megan Benage
10:15-10:45	Species Specific Control Methods by Matt Kraushar
10:45-10:55	Break
10:55-11:25	Ecological and Economic Effects of Invasives by Joshua Shields
11:25-11:55	Wildlife Truths about Invasives by Dr. Barny Dunning
11:55-12:15	Access to Resources and Assistance by Dan Dunten
12:15-1:00	Lunch Provided
1:00-3:30	Outside Rotating Stations
30 minutes	Identification Station
30 minutes	Control Methods and Application
30 minutes	Managing Your Invasive Species Problem-Site Evaluation
30 minutes	Natural Areas Hike



To register contact:

Megan Benage
 Tippecanoe Soil and Water Conservation District
 1812 Troxel Ct

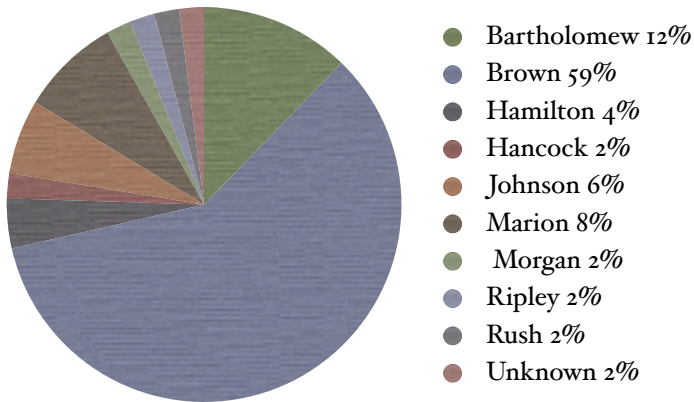
Phone: 765-474-9992 x 3
 Email: megan.benage@in.nacdn.net

NATURE DAZE WRAP UP

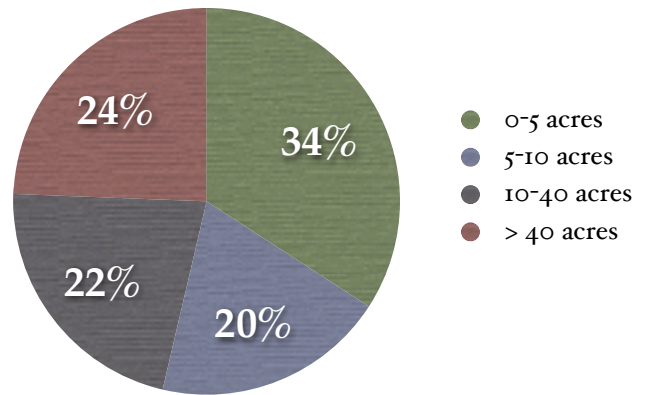
Nature Daze is an outreach event hosted by the [Brown County Native Woodlands Project](#). This unique field day helps landowners better understand the importance of managing their property to create resilient native habitat that is free of non-native invasive plants. On Saturday, September 10th, Bill and Becky Freeman hosted the 5th Annual Nature Daze event at their property in eastern Brown County.

This year’s online registration included a brief survey and over half of the people that registered online responded to the survey questions:

What is your home county?



How many acres do you own?



A BIG thank you to the organizing committee for putting together an informative and fun program for the day. Special thanks to Jane & David Savage for providing a wide variety of native plants for the plant sale, to Kevin Sullivan & Company from Rancho Framasa for organizing the kids activities & to the morning & afternoon session speakers. And, thank you to all that attended this great event! Your donations & support are greatly appreciated. See you next year!



THE BROWN COUNTY NATIVE WOODLANDS PROJECT:

- educates landowners & land managers about the problem of non-native invasive species;
- trains volunteers to map non-native invasive plant infestations;
- encourages public & private entities & individuals to eradicate targeted species;
- removes invasive species, when necessary & where possible, using environmentally sound methods
- suggests native plant alternatives

FOR MORE INFORMATION**Resources**

Directory of Professional Foresters
<http://www.findindianaforester.org/>

Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society
<http://www.inpaws.org/>

Indiana's "Most Wanted" Invasive Plant Pests
<http://extension.entm.purdue.edu/CAPS/>

Invasive and Exotic Species of North America
<http://www.invasive.org/>

Invasive Species Packet
<http://bcnwp.org/invasive-species-packet>

Midwest Invasive Plant Network
<http://mipn.org/>

Monroe County's Identify & Reduce Invasive Species
<http://mc-iris.org/>

Southern Indiana Cooperative Weed Management Area
<http://www.sicwma.org>

The Nature Conservancy in Indiana
<http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/indiana/>

USDA Plants Database
<http://www.plants.usda.gov/>

Weeds Gone Wild
<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/>



INVASIVE PLANTS IMPACT
 HUNTING, FISHING, BOATING,
 GARDENING, HIKING, BIKING,

Brown County Soil & Water Conservation District

The mission of the District is to provide information about soil, water and related natural resource conservation; identify and prioritize local soil and water resource concerns; and connect land users to sources of education, technical and financial assistance to implement conservation practices and technologies.

To learn more, visit the BCSWCD website, <http://browncountyswcd.com>.

Be part of the solution!

Learn to identify invasive plant species and take action to prevent their spread. Report infestations to the BCNWP, 812-988-0246, info@bcnwp.org.

Native Plant Nurseries

JFNew
<http://www.jfnew.com/>

Munchkin Nursery, Depauw, IN
<http://www.munchkinnursery.com/>

Native Plants Unlimited
<http://www.nativeplantsunlimited.com/>

Neuhouse Nursery, Fort Wayne, IN
<http://www.neuhouse.com/>

Prairie Moon Nursery
<http://www.prairiemoon.com/>

Prairie Nursery, Native Plants & Seeds
<http://www.prairienursery.com/store/>

Winterhaven Wildflowers
<http://www.winterhavenfarm.us/>