

Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group (CIPWG) 2016 Annual Report

The Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group (CIPWG) is a consortium of individuals, members of environmental organizations, and affiliates of municipal and state agencies whose mission is to promote awareness of invasive plants and their non-invasive alternatives. Formed in 1997 as an ad-hoc group, CIPWG is now in its 19th year of operation. The working group meets 1 to 2 times per year to collaborate and share information on the presence, distribution, ecological impacts, and management of invasive plants affecting Connecticut and the region and to promote uses of native or non-invasive ornamental alternatives. CIPWG members are affiliated with federal and state agencies, municipalities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), educational institutions, the green industry, and the general community. Donna Ellis (UConn Department of Plant Science & Landscape Architecture) serves as CIPWG Co-Chair.

The CIPWG website address is www.cipwg.uconn.edu. Kristen Ponak serves as the CIPWG webmaster. The website provides information on invasive plant topics that include identification, management, the Connecticut list of invasive plants, photos of invasive plants, invasive alternatives, resources, legislative updates, Early Detection and Research invasive plant lists, and Connecticut Invasive Plants Council activities. Online reporting forms for mile-a-minute weed (*Persicaria perfoliata*), giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), and purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) allow website visitors to provide distribution information on these species. A separate, related website exists for mile-a-minute information at www.mam.uconn.edu. The CIPWG website provides links to the Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System (EDDMapS; www.eddmaps.org) to accept additional reports of other invasive plants. Additional features and updates have been added to expand the CIPWG website, including a photo notebook with a gallery of Connecticut invasive plants, an event calendar, and links to invasive plant fact sheets and management information.

CIPWG's news and events list serve has approximately 790 members from Connecticut and other states in the region. The CIPWG list serve also resides on the UConn server, and requests to subscribe to the list serve can be submitted online from the website.

Since 2002, CIPWG has hosted biennial invasive plant symposia. The eighth biennial symposium was convened on October 11, 2016 at the UConn Student Union in Storrs, CT, with 490 people attending. The symposium theme was *Invasive Plants in Our Changing World: Learn from the Past, Prepare for the Future*. The all-day event featured national, regional, and local experts as well as citizen volunteers sharing practical solutions for invasive plant management and actions needed to promote native species and improve wildlife habitat. Nationally-recognized speaker Jil Swearingen, co-author of *Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas* delivered the Keynote address, "*We're Moving on Up: Invasive Plants Heading North*". Karl Wagener, Executive Director of the Connecticut Council on Environmental Quality, spoke about "*Connecticut's Future: Rooted in Choice*". William Hyatt, Vice Chair of the Connecticut Invasive Plants Council, provided a legislative update. Charlotte Pyle, recently retired from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service delivered closing remarks. Concurrent afternoon sessions included a panel discussion with New England invasive plant experts, creating a balanced and healthy pollinator environment, success stories managing key invasives, biological controls as valuable invasive plant management tools, aquatic invasive plants, and new invasives that threaten our borders. Research and management posters, an invasive plant identification area, and other educational exhibits were featured throughout the day. Donna Ellis received the Leslie J. Mehrhoff Award. [Symposium information](#) is available on the CIPWG website.

A fall foliage guided tour, *Celebrating Connecticut's Landscape* occurred on October 2, 2016. Tour participants viewed Connecticut's fall foliage and visited habitat management projects. Participants learned about Connecticut's native plants, habitats, and invasive plant management. The tour leaders included Peter Picone [Wildlife Biologist, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)]; Jeff Ward (CT Agricultural Experiment Station); Charlotte Pyle (Ecologist); David Irvin (CT DEEP Forester); Bill Moorhead (Botanist); Jason Marshall (Conservationist/Sportsman); and Bob LaMothe (CT Sugar Mapping Industry).

CIPWG received the 2016 Environmental Organization Award from the Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District, November 5, 2016, "In recognition of CIPWG's extensive long-term efforts to raise awareness about the threat of invasive plants, and your support and promotion of our invasive plant guide".

The Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group maintains the following subcommittees:

- Education and Outreach (educational outreach about invasive species and their alternatives)
- Management (develop and disseminate information on invasive plant control options)
- Native Alternatives (explore and promote use of native plant species as alternatives to invasives)

CIPWG provides a list of speakers who are available to give presentations on many invasive plant-related topics, including identification, control, and non-invasive alternatives. CIPWG speakers and other members coordinated and presented many lectures, workshops, demonstrations, guided field walks, and invasive plant management events during 2016. Two CIPWG exhibits that feature terrestrial plants and aquatic species continue to be displayed at numerous public events.

The CIPWG exhibits were displayed, invasive plant talks were presented, invasive plant educational materials were provided, and/or invasive plant management activities occurred at the following local, statewide, and regional events during 2016 (All towns are in CT unless otherwise noted; activities occurred in 76 CT towns). The 303 activities reported below provided a minimum of 10,808 hours of invasive plant training and other educational outreach to 39,365 Connecticut citizens, agency and municipal staff, and others:

- Ashford, consultation; Lee (10 participants)
- Ashford, 4 management activities; Wrobel (on behalf of the Ashford Conservation Commission) (24 participants, 48 hours)
- Avon, 10 management activities; Moorhead (108 participants, 544 hours)
- Avon, video produced; Moorhead (5 participants, 52 hours, multiple days)
- Bethel, exhibit for local fair; Nelson and others (20 hours)
- Bolton, community meeting; Hiskes (50 attendees, 3 hours)
- Boston, MA, presentation, New England GROWS Sprint Session; Ellis (100 attendees, 50 hours)
- Bridgeport, poster presentation; Graves (100 attendees)
- Bridgewater, exhibit for town fair; Nelson (3 days)
- Bridgewater, management activities; Nelson (1 hour)
- Bridgewater, presentation; Bugbee and Fanzutti (30 attendees)
- Bristol, judging panel for Connecticut Envirothon Field Day; Ellis, Rowlands, Gumbart (65 participants, 450 hours)
- Brookfield, management activities; Nelson (2 hours)
- Burlington, Durham, and Newington, 5 training sessions; Donnelly, Picone, Pyle, and Villwock (102 participants, 510 hours)
- Burlington and Litchfield, 2 guided tours; Moorhead (27 participants, 177 hours)

- Cromwell, exhibit, Connecticut Grounds Keepers Association Turf and Landscape Conference; Ellis (300 attendees, 8 hours)
- Danbury, presentation; Bugbee (40 attendees)
- Danielson, exhibit for town fair; Lee (200 attendees, 6 hours)
- Durham, exhibit for town fair; Barsky (100 attendees)
- Eastford, exhibit for town fair; Lee (200 attendees, 5 hours)
- Eastford, management activities; Lee (5 participants, 15 hours)
- East Granby, 19 management activities; Clifford (on behalf of the East Granby Land Trust) (52 participants, 106 hours)
- East Haddam, presentation; Bugbee (90 attendees)
- East Hartford, 2 workshops; Bugbee and Fanzutti (85 participants)
- England, poster presentation at conference; Graves (200 attendees)
- Fairfield, 9 management activities; Brodlie (on behalf of the Aspetuck Land Trust) (44 participants, 23 hours)
- Falls Village, exhibit for symposium and workshop; Nelson (130 attendees)
- Falls Village, presentation, Housatonic Valley Regional High School Envirothon; Zetterstrom and Allyn (on behalf of the Elm Watch Invasive Initiative)
- Farmington, Science Olympiad proctoring; Bugbee and Cavadini (35 participants, 16 hours)
- Goshen, exhibit for town fair; Nelson (3 days)
- Granby, exhibit, Connecticut Nursery and Landscape Association Summer Symposium Day; Ellis and Brennan (300 attendees, 16 hours)
- Grand Rapids, MI, award recipient for invasive plant article; Bugbee
- Hamden, exhibit, Plant Science Day, The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station; Ellis (1,183 attendees, 8 hours)
- Hampton, workshop, Robinson (8 participants, 2 hours)
- Hartford, exhibit, Connecticut Flower and Garden Show; 20 volunteers worked 51 hours (30,000 attendees)
- Hartford and Storrs, administrative support for Invasive Plant Council meetings; Ellis (9 members, 50 hours, multiple days)
- Hartford, poster presentation; Graves (200 attendees)
- Hartford, presentation; Bugbee (12 attendees)
- Litchfield, guided tour; Ward (31 participants)
- Litchfield, presentation; Ward, Barsky, and Massa (18 attendees)
- Litchfield and Norfolk, 2 training workshops; Moorhead (9 participants, 27 hours)
- Madison, exhibit for Earth Day; French and Weissbach-Licht (34 attendees, 10 hours)
- Madison, WI, poster presentation at national convention; Ward
- Manchester, consultation; Ward and Barsky (4 participants)
- Middlefield, workshop; Robinson (8 participants, 2 hours)
- Middlefield, workshop; Zetterstrom
- Middletown, management activities; Hall (160 participants, 50 hours, multiple days)
- Milford, consultation; Ward (2 participants)
- Milford, presentation; Sirch (25 attendees, 3 hours)
- Millerton, NY, management activities; Nelson
- New Fairfield, exhibit for opening day event; Nelson (200 attendees, 8 hours)
- New Haven, presentation; Bugbee (50 attendees)
- New Haven, presentation; Dreyer (50 attendees)

- New Haven, presentation; Ellis and Cheah (60 attendees)
- New Haven, presentation, Saunders (8 attendees)
- New Haven, training; Lee (40 participants, 5 hours)
- New London, presentation; Bugbee (40 attendees)
- New London, presentation; Dreyer (12 attendees)
- New Milford, exhibit for local fair; Nelson (16 hours, 2 days)
- New Milford, 12 management activities; Nelson (2 participants, 39 hours, multiple days at 14 properties)
- New Milford, presentation; Bugbee and Fanzutti (14 attendees)
- New Milford and Bridgewater, management activities; Nelson (9 participants, 22 hours, 2 days)
- Niantic, workshop; Ellis (105 participants, 53 hours)
- North Branford, guided tour; Ward (4 participants)
- North Canaan, 3 management activities; Zetterstrom and Allyn (on behalf of the Elm Watch Invasive Initiative) (3 days)
- North Guilford, presentation; Bugbee (30 attendees)
- Norwich, presentation; Bugbee and Fanzutti (35 attendees)
- Norwich, training; Lee (35 participants, 5 hours)
- Philadelphia, PA, presentation, Northeastern Plant, Pest, and Soils Conference; Ellis (60 attendees)
- Plantsville, exhibit, Connecticut Nursery and Landscape Association Winter Symposium and Expo; Ellis (250 attendees, 8 hours)
- Plantsville, presentation, Connecticut Nursery and Landscape Association Winter Symposium and Expo; Ellis (100 attendees)
- Redding, consultation; Williams (2 participants)
- Rockfall, workshop; Zetterstrom (on behalf of the Elm Watch Invasive Initiative)
- Rocky Hill, presentation, Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions Annual Conference; Hiskes (73 attendees)
- Roxbury, exhibit for local fair, Nelson (150 attendees, 4 hours)
- Roxbury, 4 management activities; Nelson (2 participants, 18 hours, multiple days at 6 properties)
- Salisbury, management activities; Zetterstrom (on behalf of the Elm Watch Invasive Initiative)
- Salisbury, workshop; Zetterstrom (on behalf of the Elm Watch Invasive Initiative)
- Sharon, presentation; Zetterstrom (on behalf of the Elm Watch Invasive Initiative)
- Sharon, student orientation; Zetterstrom and Allyn (on behalf of the Elm Watch Invasive Initiative)
- Simsbury, 2 management activities; Rieger (8 participants, 16 hours)
- Simsbury, presentation; Hiskes (14 attendees)
- Southbury, presentation and poster, Connecticut Association of Wetland Scientists Annual Meeting; Evans (215 attendees, 3 hours)
- Springfield, MA, presentation; Williams (50 attendees)
- Stamford, 30 management activities; McCann and Piselli, Mill River Park Collaborative (800 participants; 2,025 hours)
- Stamford, training; Lee (26 participants, 5 hours)
- Statewide, 2 invasive plant publications; Rowlands
- Statewide, mentoring for UConn undergraduate students and a high school student; Ellis (4 participants, 400 hours, multiple days)
- Storrs, CIPWG Symposium; 29 speakers and moderators, 10 poster presenters, 9 exhibitors, and 20 staff (490 attendees/participants, 3,920 hours)
- Storrs, demonstration, CIPWG Symposium; Bugbee and Fanzutti (490 participants, 6 hours)

- Storrs, exhibit, UConn Garden Conference; Ellis (150 attendees)
- Storrs, exhibit, UConn Sustainable Landscape Conference; Ellis (187 attendees)
- Storrs, presentation; Bugbee (25 attendees)
- Storrs, presentation; Ellis (20 attendees)
- Tolland, presentation; Ellis (60 attendees)
- Tolland, presentation; Ward (33 attendees)
- Torrington, training; Lee (30 participants, 5 hours)
- Various locations, mile-a-minute weed biological control project, 26 release and monitoring sites visited in CT; Cheah, Ellis, Nelson, Varricchio (4 participants, 736 hours, multiple days)
- Various locations, purple loosestrife biological control project, 13 release and monitoring sites visited in CT; Ellis (50 hours, multiple days)
- Various locations, research; Moorhead (5 participants, 20 hours)
- Vernon, presentation; Hiskes (44 attendees)
- Vernon, training; Lee (32 participants, 5 hours)
- Wallingford, 15 management activities, Saunders (34 participants, 180 hours)
- Wallingford, research; Smith (multiple days)
- Washington, guided tour; Ellis (15 participants, 50 hours)
- West Hartford, guided tour; Ellis (17 participants, 40 hours)
- West Hartford, presentation; Williams (60 attendees)
- Weston, 12 management activities; Brodlie (on behalf of the Aspetuck Land Trust) (74 participants, 41 hours)
- Westport, consultation; Ward and Massa (3 participants)
- Westport, 8 management activities; Brodlie (on behalf of the Aspetuck Land Trust) (40 participants, 33 hours)
- Windsor, guided tour; Robinson (6 participants, 2 hours)
- Windsor and Storrs, CIPWG Symposium Planning Committee, 13 meetings; Ellis and Picone (Committee Co-chairs) (20 members, 800 hours, multiple days)
- Woodstock, 2 exhibits for town fairs; Lee (950 attendees, 38 hours, 5 days)

Submitted by Donna Ellis (UConn Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture; CIPWG Co-chair), with contributions from many other CIPWG members included above.

20 December 2016