

Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group (CIPWG) Minutes from the April 8, 2015 General Meeting

The Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group (CIPWG) held a general meeting on April 8, 2015 at the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area in Burlington, CT. The meeting began at 1:00 p.m. and was attended by approximately 30 people.

1. Welcome and Introductions

CIPWG Co-chair Donna Ellis (UConn Department of Plant Science & Landscape Architecture) welcomed everyone. Brief introductions were made by the attendees, and a sign-in sheet was distributed. Donna thanked Peter Picone (CT DEEP) for making arrangements for today's meeting at Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area and providing refreshments.

2. CIPWG T-shirts

Charlotte Pyle (USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service) informed the attendees that CIPWG t-shirts were available to purchase at cost during the meeting. The t-shirts had been printed for the 2014 CIPWG invasive plant symposium.

3. CIPWG Speakers' List for 2015

The [CIPWG Speakers' List](#) was distributed for updates and additional speakers. The Speakers' List is posted on the CIPWG website and provides contact information for members who are available to give presentations on invasive plants and their non-invasive alternatives at public events and other meetings.

4. Steering Committee Updates

Donna Ellis provided an update on the CIPWG Steering Committee. The Steering Committee meeting was held prior to the general meeting today. Invitations will be extended for new members to join the committee who represent state agencies, conservation and inland wetland commissions, public works, the green industry, and conduct invasive plant field work.

5. Sub-committees

a. Native Alternatives (Charlotte Pyle and Peter Picone, Co-chairs)

Charlotte Pyle reported that the subcommittee has a list of native plants to be recommended. Arthur Haines' book, *New England Wild Flower Society's Flora Novae Angliae* was used to determine which names are synonyms of each other for the database. Each plant appears on the list once and includes any synonyms, similar to the [Go Botany](#) website. The list will have species that are commercially available. Charlotte hopes to have the first list available online in the fall on the CIPWG website.

b. Management (Charlotte Pyle and Todd Mervosh, Co-chairs)

The Management Subcommittee has been working on updating the invasive plant management information on the CIPWG website and will work with individuals who have expertise in invasive plant management to provide input for the updates. Links to management information from other sources will also be provided on the website. Nicole Gabelman, who became the new Connecticut Invasive Plant Coordinator in

October 2014 and Brad Robinson (formerly with CT DEEP) volunteered to join the subcommittee. Nicole will provide leadership with the website updates.

c. Education and Outreach (Donna Ellis, Chair)

Donna Ellis informed the group about educational information available on the CIPWG website, including the 2014 CIPWG invasive plant symposium Proceedings, speaker PowerPoint presentations, a slide show, and other materials from the conference.

d. Volunteer

While a Volunteer Subcommittee has not yet been formalized, CIPWG members participate in many volunteer activities, such as adopting sites for invasive plant management, conducting pulling parties and other control events, and staffing educational exhibits at public and professional meetings. A suggestion was made to get feedback on the number of volunteer activities CIPWG members participate in and how many people take part in these events. Nicole Gabelman talked about [volunteer opportunities with CT DEEP](#) at state parks.

6. CIPWG Symposium Evaluations Summary

The 7th biennial CIPWG invasive plant symposium was held on October 7, 2014 at the UConn Student Union in Storrs, CT. A sell-out crowd of 500 people attended. Charlotte Pyle and Penni Sharp (Penni was a CIPWG Co-chair who sadly passed away in December 2014) served as Co-chairs of the Symposium Planning Committee. Nicole Gabelman summarized the symposium evaluations and gave a PowerPoint presentation to the group. The majority of the symposium speakers provided PDF versions of their PowerPoint presentations and/or speaker notes, and these have been posted on the [CIPWG website](#).

7. Connecticut Invasive Plants Council Update

Nicole Gabelman, Donna Ellis, and Nancy Murray (CT DEEP) provided an update on the Connecticut Invasive Plants Council. The council convenes 5 to 7 meetings per year, which are open to the public, makes recommendations to the Connecticut legislature regarding invasive plants, and compiles annual reports. Meeting minutes, annual reports, and other council information can be found on the [CIPWG website](#).

8. Early Detection and Research Lists

The invasive plant [Early Detection and Research Lists](#) have been posted on the CIPWG website by Nicole Gabelman. Nicole asked the group to be on the lookout for the species on both lists and report any locations to her at nicole.gabelman@uconn.edu. She has added photos and other descriptive information for each species on the website to help with identification. A suggestion was made to add *Viburnum sieboldii* to the Research List.

9. Presentation: Sessions Woods Habitat Management

Peter Picone gave a very informative and interesting presentation on the [Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area](#), which has 10,000 visitors per year. Peter discussed the native and invasive species at Sessions Woods and how they manage the property to optimize wildlife habitat.

10. CIPWG Website Update

Nicole Gabelman informed the group about recent updates to the [CIPWG website](#). She provided many enhancements to the CIPWG Photo Notebook that accompanies the poster display, added new pages for additional plants on the list, organized the notebook into plant groups, and included new management information. The [Photo Notebook](#) is available for viewing on the CIPWG website. Nicole continues to provide support for the website with Kristen Ponak, CIPWG webmaster.

11. Open Forum – Idea and Information Exchange

The meeting attendees discussed various topics during the Open Forum.

- a. Kathleen Nelson (Mad Gardeners, Inc.) suggested that people exercise caution describing plants as “not known to be invasive” in the case that they are later shown to meet the scientific criteria as potentially invasive or invasive species. She also expressed concern that plants from the south may move north into New England, become established, and survive.
- b. Cynthia Boettner (Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge) was unable to attend the meeting but provided an update on water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) control efforts that the Conte Refuge has been involved with and was pleased to report their success in recruiting several Connecticut partners for water chestnut removal. Management of this aquatic invasive has been underway since 1997.
- c. Donna Ellis gave a brief update on mile-a-minute weed (*Persicaria perfoliata*). The CIPWG website has a section on [mile-a-minute](#), including an on-line reporting form.

12. Other Old or New Business

- a. Donna Ellis mentioned that the 2014 CIPWG Annual Report was completed. The report, a summary of CIPWG activities, educational outreach, and management was posted on the CIPWG website, sent out via the CIPWG list serve, and included in the [12th Annual Report of the Connecticut Invasive Plants Council](#).
- b. A suggestion was made to include more youth activities at invasive plant educational outreach events.
- c. Everyone was encouraged to submit calendar items on the CIPWG website.

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Following the meeting, Peter Picone led a site walk around Sessions Woods.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Ellis, CIPWG Co-chair

4 October 2015