

**Invasive Plants Council
Minutes
January 13, 2004**

Present: Dr. Anderson, , Mr. Goodwin , Comm. Gresczyk , Mr. Larson, Comm. Leff, Dr. Mehrhoff, Dr. Musgrave, Mr. Sutherland.

Absent: Mr. McGowan

The Meeting was called to order at 10:38 AM by Chairman Leff in Room 1A of the Legislative Office Building.

Chairman Leff had the members of the council introduce themselves to members and the audience.

There was a motion by Dr. Anderson to approve the minutes of December 23, 2003. The motion was seconded by Mr. Larson. The motion carried on a voice vote.

Mark Brand from the University of Connecticut gave a presentation on current research he is conducting on cultivars. He is studying approximately 40 cultivars of Japanese Barberry and 10 cultivars of Winged Euonymus. He and his assistants are collecting fruit from plants and planting them to see what grows and how it grows. They are studying how light and location affects how these fruit grow. They are also testing to see what characteristics the seedlings have. Their preliminary findings are that fruit from green cultivars can yield green and purple plants and that purple cultivars can yield purple and green plants. Shade tends to increase the likelihood that a green plant will grow. He stated that it is commonly believed that these plants are spread by wild Turkey. Dr. Mehrhoff noted that Rough Grouse and many song birds also spread these plants.

Yi Li from UCONN gave a presentation on his work of taking a biotech approach to combating invasive plants. He is working on a method of genetically modifying plants so that they have a gene added that will increase production of Auxin, a plant hormone. This increased hormone production will cause the plant to not produce pollen, and thus not produce seeds. This method has worked with tomatoes so he feels it will work with other plants as well. He is also working with using an enzyme that would destroy the RNA of the plants, which would also lead to no pollen production. If you combine both of these methods you end up with a super-sterile fruit, which still produces good fruit.

Mark Brand also noted that they are working on a non-genetic method of making sterile cultivars, they are working with using toxin that inhibits cellular mitosis and thus produce sterile seeds. He also noted that it is very difficult to identify cultivars. They are starting to use a technique called amplified fragment length polymorphism to identify cultivars using DNA.

Cultivars Discussion:

Continued discussion from previous meeting about footnote to be added to the invasive plant list. Dr. Anderson suggested that the footnote be abbreviated because it is too long to be considered a footnote and probably won't be read. He suggested that no example and no suggestion from the council be included. There was consensus from the council to make these changes.

The subcommittee working on the footnote reported suggestions for minor changes to the footnote including; in the 3rd sentence adding the words “are commercially available” and in the 2nd sentence using the word “that” instead of “which.”

There was a motion by Mr. Goodwin to adopt the language of the footnote (asterisk). The motion was seconded by Dr. Anderson. The motion carried on a voice vote.

There was a discussion about what plants on the invasive list would bear this asterisk. Mr. Goodwin suggested 6 plants to be asterisked: *Acer Platanoides* (Norway Maple), *Berberis Thunbergii* (Japanese Barberry), *Euonymus alatus* (Winged Euonymus), *Rosa Rugosa* (Rugosa Rose), *Ampelopsis Brevipedunculata* (Porcelainberry), *Lonicera Japonica* (Japanese Honeysuckle.) There was a motion by Mr. Sutherland to accept these plants to be asterisked. The motion was seconded by Mr. Larson. The motion carried on a voice vote.

The council began a discussion on Herbaceous plants to be added to the invasive list. Mr. Goodwin asked whether *Veronica* (European speedwell) should be included on the list. Dr. Mehrhoff noted that it was very difficult to distinguish between European Speedwell and our native *Veronica*. There was a consensus of the council to remove European Speedwell and Silver Hairgrass from the invasive list. The council also agreed to remove Wild Garlic and Thunberg's *Geranium* as well.

Chairman Leff asked if there were asterisks to be added to the Herbaceous plants on the list. Mr. Larson suggested three plants to be asterisked: *Lysimachia Nummularia* (Moneywort), *Lysimachia Vulgaris* (Garden Loosestrife), *Miscanthus Sinensis* (Eulalia). There was a consensus of the council to asterisk these three plants.

Dr. Mehrhoff noted that he knows of one other plant that should be added to the invasive plant list, he will bring information on that plant for the next meeting.

There was a motion by Dr. Anderson to add the Herbaceous plants and grasses to the invasive plant list with the asterisks noted. The motion was seconded by Dr. Mehrhoff. The motion carried on a voice vote.

Chairman Leff asked if there was anyone on the council who felt the need to have a public hearing on the list before it is published. The consensus was that the council meetings have given ample time for the public to learn about the potential list.

Chairman Leff announced speakers for the next meeting:
Sandy Breslin from Audubon CT
Donna Ellis from the Invasive Plants Working Group
Comm. Grescyk will discuss the Dept. of Ag. Work with Pet Shops in CT.

The council will also have discussions on Education Issues, the Ban List, and the Municipal Pre-emption.

The council agreed to the following meetings:

February 10th 10:00 AM (Room 1B)
February 26th 10:00 AM (Room 1B)

March 11th 10:00 AM
March 25th 10:00 AM

Respectfully Submitted,

Emanuel Merisotis
Clerk- Environment Committee