



Plants out of Place

The newsletter of the
**INVASIVE PLANTS ASSOCIATION OF
WISCONSIN**

Issue 6 February 2004

IPAW Board of Directors

Dan Undersander, President
Professor of Agronomy
University of Wisconsin
1575 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706
(608) 263-5070; Djunders@facstaff.wisc.edu

Rolf Utegaard, Vice President
Land Manager and Director
Eau Claire County Exposition Center
P.O. Box 1092, Eau Claire, WI 54702
(715) 834-0065; bigute-hort@prodigy.net

Nancy Braker, Secretary
Director of Science and Stewardship
The Nature Conservancy
633 W. Main Street, Madison, WI 53703
(608) 251-8140; nbraker@tnc.org

Thomas Boos, Treasurer
Wisconsin DNR, 4440 Pleasant Valley Rd.
Black Earth, WI 53515; (608) 767-2184
Thomas.Boos@dnr.state.wi.us

Jaime Corbisier
Door Co Soil & Water Cons.
Dept., P.O. Box 670 Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
(920) 746-2214; jcorbisi@co.door.wi.us

Lauren Ebbecke
2101 Ellis Street, Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 342-2672; lebbecke@spencer.k12.wi.us

Patrick Goggin
Vilas County Conservationist
Land & Water Cons. Dept.
Vilas Co. Court House
330 Court St., Eagle River, WI 54521
(715) 479-3648; pagogg@co.vilas.wi.us

David Hamel
N8973 4th Ave., Westfield, WI 54521
(608) 296-2866; sdhamel@maQs.net

Susan Lehnhardt, Consulting Ecologist
Applied Ecological Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 256, Brodhead, WI 53520
(608) 897-8641; Susan@appliedeco.com

Jim Reinartz, Director
UW - Milwaukee Field Station
3095 Blue Goose Road, Saukville, WI 53080
(262) 675-6844; jimr@uwm.edu

Gene Roark
16 Grand Ave., Madison, WI 53705
(608) 238-5349

David Spatcher, DuPont Corporation
513 W. Mulberry Dr., West Bend, WI 53090
(262) 335-0754;
David.L.Spatcher@USA.dupont.com

Steven Strachota, Dairyland Seed Corp.
P.O. Box 958, West Bend, WI 53095-0958
(262) 338-0163; sstrachota@dairylandseed.com

Donna Van Buecken,
Executive Director The Wild Ones
2801 E. Hietpas, Appleton, WI 54911
(920) 730-3986; IPAWmbrshp@aol.com

Join us at the *Invasive Plant Mapping Workshop*

(hosted by the Science Committee and WDNR)

February 25th, 2004

9 - 4 (5*) pm

Building 40, University Center Room 125

1015 Reserve St

University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point

The goal of this one-day workshop is to share information on current and proposed invasive plant inventory, mapping, database and monitoring projects in Wisconsin and the upper Midwest. Coordinating project data and information will also be discussed. The workshop is free, lunch is brown bag/on your own, but refreshments will be provided. Please contact Kelly Kearns (kelly.kearns@dnr.state.wi.us; (608) 267-5066) or Heather Patti (heather.patti@gasai.com; (414) 266-9055) for details/RSVP.

* *Midwest Invasive Plants Network Data Management Committee meeting: For those interested in sharing information across state lines, please stay after the workshop for a one hour meeting to discuss how we can best coordinate data management efforts.*

COMMUNICATION IN THE NAME OF PROGRESS

Submitted by Nancy Braker

Those of us concerned about invasive plants and substituting native species to replace the invasives despair many times about getting the word out to the general public. This can be difficult unless the public first perceives a threat to the environment with which they are familiar.

The City of Glendale formed a Native Landscaping Committee in the 1990's, because they were caught between that part of the population pushing for native landscaping and the other part that felt threatened by "natural lawns." The City Inspector found the ordinance on the books unworkable, and she was not familiar with the native species.

I became a part of that first committee, and we worked out an ordinance that respected the rights of people who didn't want to be invaded by "natural lawns." Actually we pointed out that people using native landscaping with native species knew their plants and usually kept out invasive plants and Eurasian "weeds." We were able to get the City Council to approve this proposed ordinance and then stated that we would be willing to be on call if the City Inspector needed us for plant identification and information about invasives. (There are a few residents who say they have native landscaping, but, really, they have not maintained their yards and have just let nature take its course with any plants. Of course, these people give native landscapers a bad name.)

I have become chair of this City Committee, and we have tried to interest the citizens in recognizing and doing away with buckthorn and garlic mustard in particular. We have had articles in the city newsletter, library displays and public, free seminars, but we haven't stirred the majority of the public. Last spring we had a seminar at the North Shore Library

featuring speakers (experts) on (the positive) rain gardens and (the negative) gypsy moths. There were only 25 people present. Now, this summer, everyone is upset about the gypsy moths and lacking the knowledge they need to deal with it.

We have done other things as a committee of nine. One activity has been to fashion a resolution for the City Council to approve to promote the planting of native species and stop the planting of non-native invasives. We worked and reworked this resolution and finally presented it to the City Council in June. We had several knowledgeable people testify about why the City of Glendale should pass this resolution. The news of our presentation ended up on the front page of the Milwaukee Journal. Some readers felt threatened, interpreting this to mean that we were proposing that the city forester rip out all those Norway maples he has been planting as well as other plants that these people like. The city administrator received some angry and crank calls on this. The mayor and the council suggested that we sit down with the administrator and forester and work out a compromise. There were four sessions in all over a period of a month during which it became evident that some members of our committee were unwilling to compromise.

What this boils down to is, if we are ever going to get anything passed, we will have to listen to the other side. We will have to meet them half-way if we are ever going to progress to something better.

Certainly, I utilized a bit of politicking to get our final proposal passed by the committee. But the people unwilling to compromise gave us a lot of trouble. At the council meeting where we again presented the compromised resolution with a positive statement by me, these people blanketed the meeting with experts testifying why we should not compromise. The alderwoman who is one of these people tried to introduce an amendment to change the resolution to mandatory. There were no takers on the City Council, and the amendment died. The resolution passed, and the Council charged us with observing whether or not in this next year the resolution will have changed actions by the city forester and the public. So now we've got work to do.

Pulling out the positives, this is what I have observed:

Some of the citizens and the city government have given us their ear and heard us.

All that testimony at the second council meeting was good. It again accentuated the problem and, politically, it made us, the compromisers, look "reasonable."

We have been given a charge that will, necessarily, require better communication with the city forester.

We need to work harder on education of the public, the Planning Commission, and landscapers in the area this year.

The time of the purists is up. It is our turn to reach out beyond "our kind." The petunia people can no longer be smug in their little world. We have information to share in reasonable ways.

Report of IPAW Annual Meeting

Submitted by Dan Undersander, President of IPAW

The annual meeting of IPAW was held from 11:45 to 12:30 at the Monona Terrace in Madison, WI during the Invasive Plant of the Upper Midwest Symposium at the Natural Areas Conference. Approximately 60 people attended. The directors, webmaster and newsletter editor were introduced and individuals encouraged to contact any of them with suggestions, ideas, help, etc. A summary of committee activities for the past year was handed out.

Jim Reinartz gave a short report on the process for the invasive weed survey and

Get Involved in Regional and County Groups!

The following groups are

actively working at invasive species control around Wisconsin. They can use your help! Contacts are listed.

Central - Mike Engel
Mike_Engel@fws.gov
(608) 221-1206 ext 21

Western - Rolf Uttegaard
bigute-hort@prodigy.net
(715) 834-0065

Northwoods Weed Initiative - Quita Sheehan
msheehan01@fs.fed.us
(715) 479-2827

Northeastern - Gene Tiser
tiser@dnr.state.wi.us
(920) 492-5836

Southern - Coordinator needed

Southeast - Coordinator needed

Milwaukee County Weed Out - Ken Solis
ksolis@drjump.com
(414) 423-1709

Southwest - Coordinator needed

Door County - Jamie Corbiser
jcorbisi@co.door.wi.us
(920) 746-2214

Greater Sauk County - Jim Welsh
jwelsh@tnc.org
(608) 251-8140

Monroe County - Kim Mello
kim.mello@emh2.mccoy.army.mil
(608) 388-5766

Brown County - Paul Hartman
paul.hartman@ces.uwex.edu
(920) 391-4610

resulting list. Input was sought from the audience. Members can still go to the IPAW website and access a form to fill out concerning location of invasive species. Future activities relating to development and use of the invasive weed list were discussed.

Meeting attendees were also asked what they would like to see the organization do. One suggestion was to work with WDOT and county and township staff mowing ditch banks to develop protocols for minimizing spread of invasive weed seeds while mowing. Another was to improve the website with pictures, description and control methods of invasive weeds.

All attendees were asked to forward to Dan Undersander (djunders@wisc.edu) any facts, pictures, or short articles documenting the impact and cost of invasive weeds. IPAW would like to combine these into pamphlets documenting the impact invasive weeds have on landowners and communities.

IPAW Symposium

September 28, 2003

*Submitted by David Hamel
Westfield, Wisconsin*

Yesterday I attended the Invasive Plants of the Upper Midwest Symposium, part of Wisconsin's 30th Natural Areas Conference, held at the beautiful Monona Terrace convention center in Madison. What an encouraging experience!

Usually when standing to speak about an invasive species I'm met with blank looks or hostile stares and shouted objections. That often happens in my rural township when I try to interest the Town Board in reducing their annual spread of weed seeds by changing their roadside mowing schedule. So far, no change. We still have a contractor mow 15 feet wide on both sides of 54 miles of town road every September when the spotted knapweed, sweet clover, wild parsnip, and leafy spurge seeds are ready and waiting to ride on the mower deck for a few miles until they jiggle off at a new site. Like Rodney Dangerfield, "I get no respect." But yesterday in the symposium talks, panel discussions, and workshops on all aspects of invasive alien plants, I found myself surrounded by friendly faces and voices eager to answer questions and agree with my worries and suggestions. Viva la difference!

So today I'm cheered by prospects for the future. I have a dream that someday the IPAW web site will show, for each of Wisconsin's wayward roadside aliens, a new category: "When to avoid mechanical mowing (to avoid the spread of viable seeds)." I cheer for the many dedicated weed whackers working hard to develop "control" and "eradication" of the various species. But if priorities have to be established to steer research and maintenance dollars toward the most effective immediate payback, I'd follow the paramedic's pledge, "first, do no harm." While hundreds of staff and volunteers hand pull, chop and poison hundreds of acres of destructive roadside weed infestations, thousands of government employees and contractors are actively spreading the seeds of these same species to establish new infestations on thousands of new roadside acres. Ten steps back for each step forward.

In my dream, there is no date specific end to each species' mowing season. There is a phenological date such as, "5 days after first blossoms show color", or, "when buds exceed 5mm diameter". Such dates do not now exist because they fail the "silver bullet" test and are, admittedly, more complicated. Americans love the simple solution epitomized by western six guns. But in my dream we get over our devotion to a single calendar date, a single shot of chemical, one cure for all situations. One day, we'll all believe that fixing nature is not that simple.

And in my dream, it is not possible or necessary to change roadside mowing practice into a weed control operation. Nor will it be possible to stop the mowing altogether. The gigantic cost annually applied to the shoulder of the road is now such a part of the American existence, it's as unstoppable as lawn mowing. It no longer needs justification, we just do it because we do it. But if a few people continue to gather in congenial circumstances to discuss their belief in science and their vision of the future, there is hope that some day we will find a way to stop being our own worst enemy in the war on exotic species.

In my dream a few jurisdictions will implement schedules that finish all roadside mowing of infested sections early in the summer just before the worst invasives set viable seed. Seedheads that develop after that will be left unmolested for the rest of the year, to fall on sullied ground where they were born. There they will await the day when science and imagination can deliver the "control" and eradication techniques that restore, somewhat, a balance of nature to our beautiful roadsides and to the lands they adjoin.

The symposium's stated purpose was to "provide participants with the latest information in the field". Just as important, this gathering provides participants with the inspiration and motivation to keep at it.



Invasive Species Spotlight

helping members identify and manage problematic plants

Myriophyllum spicatum L.

[Eurasian water-milfoil]



Eurasian water milfoil [EWM] is a submersed aquatic plant native to Europe, Asia, and northern Africa. It is the only non-native milfoil in Wisconsin. It grows rapidly and tends to form thick mats (a dense canopy on the water surface). These mats interfere with swimming and other recreation, inhibit water flow, and entangle propellers, which hinder boating, fishing, and waterfowl hunting. Matted EWM can displace native aquatic plants, impacting fish and wildlife communities.

ID tips:

- * Small reddish flowers above water in mid-summer;
- * Each leaf with 12-21 leaflet pairs versus northern water milfoil (*Myriophyllum sibiricum*) with fewer;
- * Stems branch near water surface; and
- * 3 to 5 feathery leaves arranged in whorls (circles) on stems

Since it was discovered in North America in the 1940's, EWM has invaded nearly every US state and at least three Canadian provinces. Milfoil spreads when plant fragments break off and float on water currents. It can cross land to new waters by clinging to sailboats, personal watercraft, powerboats, motors, trailers, and fishing gear. Eradicating established EWM infestations is nearly impossible. Your help in detecting and reporting new infestations is vital for preventing their spread.

What you can do:

- * Learn to identify EWM;
- * Inspect and remove aquatic plants and animals from boat, motor, and trailer;
- * Drain lake or river water from livewell and bilge;
- * Dispose of unwanted live bait properly;
- * Dry everything for at least 5 days; OR
- * Rinse boat/equipment with high-pressure hot water (104° F), especially if moored for more than a day; and
- * Report new sightings-note exact location (GPS if possible) by wrapping a plant fragment in a wet paper towel, placing it in a sealed plastic bag, and calling your local land and water conservation department or DNR office to have it looked at by a professional.

Currently, herbicides or mechanical harvesting are most often used to control water milfoil infestations. Biological control is another possible tool using the native milfoil weevil, *Euhrychiopsis lecontei*, which has been associated with natural declines of EWM and has shown some potential in controlled experiments in the field.

New legislation assisting WDNR in battling invasive aquatic species statewide

2001-2003 budgets

- **\$300,000 annually from Water Resources Seg Account (motor boat gas tax dollars)**

Allocated as follows:

- Information and Education \$132,000
 - Brochures, watch cards, etc,
 - "Clean Boats, Clean Waters" workshops
contact Laura Felda
715-346-3366/ lfelda@uwsp.edu
- Watercraft Inspection \$50,000
 - 11 DNR inspectors statewide [850 inspection hours]
 - Installed signs at 2300 boat landings statewide
 - Educated boaters about new aquatic plant law and
invasive aquatic identification
 - Taught citizens how to inspect boat/prevent the spread
- Monitoring \$50,000
 - Zebra mussels, Eurasian water milfoil and purple loosestrife
- Purple Loosestrife Biocontrol \$68,000
 - Organized volunteers help to raise and release beetles
 - Training workshops throughout state on biocontrol
 - Contact Brock Woods / 608-221-6349 / woods@dnr.state.wi.us



2004-2005 Budgets

- Maintains base support of \$300,000 to DNR programs
- Provides funding for grants to local government/municipalities of \$500,000 for invasive aquatic species prevention, education, and control efforts through DNR Lake Planning Grants - see web site for more information < <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/fhp/lakes/lakeplan.htm> >
- Funds a *Invasives Species Coordinator* position
 - \$28,300 in FY 04
 - \$56,600 in FY 05
- Increases the baseline funding of \$250,000 for each fiscal year



Check Out the Updated IPAW Website

Our Web page has been going through a transformation over the past several months, thanks to volunteer Marsha Vomastic. We have a great new design and expanded information. See what the IPAW website has to offer!

Reed Bed Management Review

An initial background check of the area adjoining the treatment plant perimeter shall be conducted, and include an area 100-feet from the walls of the proposed reed beds. The initial background check and subsequent annual reviews shall be the responsibility of the Village of Egg Harbor and forward to DNR for review.

Phragmites plant cuttings harvested from the reed beds shall be properly disposed of. **Allowable disposal methods include, but are not limited to**, composting, chipping, burning, and landfilling. As an alternative to annual harvesting, burning the plants in place, within the confines of the reed beds, is acceptable. Removal of biosolids from the reed beds shall incorporate a method to separate and remove viable root stock from the biosolids when land application is utilized for biosolids disposal. Mechanical screens, rotating drums or other similar equipment, which effectively separates and removes root stock material from the biosolids, shall be utilized. Disposal of the separate root stock material shall be in accordance with the aforementioned plant harvesting procedures. In the event biosolids are removed from the reed beds for landfill disposal, separating and removing the root stock material shall not be required. Land application of biosolids, free of root stock material shall be in accordance with the current WPDES permit.

One item that is of great concern that is not addressed in the long term management of the reed bed is containment of the aggressive species and control of potential spread, namely **by seed sources**. Local concerned citizens and other members of the community including other local governmental units, are urging the small municipalities installing these rebeds to reconsider. Common ground or compromise is being found in those instances where native strains of phragmites is being used instead of the aggressive strain. Others are turning to experts to again explore other species such as cattails or bulrush. However, at this time, phragmites still seems to be the hardy choice. Native Phragmites works just as effectively as the aggressive strain, however, if the plant were to escape the reed bed system, the detriment to other native habitats could be tolerable. Native strains tend to coexist with other species in a less aggressive manner relative to the New Jersey strain. Below are a couple hints on phragmites differences.

Native plants inflorescences are often sparse while the non-native are much more dense. Native plants also flower earlier (July-August) while the non-native flower a bit later (August-September). When the plant blooms, the flower or plume is a very dark and appears black.



Non-native plants leaves stay tightly clasped to the stems which are green and a greenish tan. Native plants have loose leaf sheaths that fall off easily and the stems turn reddish and brown.

The native stems are also soft, smooth and shiny and could have small dark spots at the nodes. Non-native stems are tough, dull and ribbed. These ridges are visible to the naked eye.

The genus name Phragmites is of Greek origin meaning "fence" and thought to be named after the dense fence like growth noticed along stream

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Plants out of Place is a periodic newsletter distributed to the members of IPAW.

Send comments, suggestions, and articles that you think may be of interest to IPAW members to:

Invasive Plants Association of Wisconsin
P. O. Box 5274
Madison, WI 53705-0274



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P.O. Box 5274
Madison, WI 53705-0274

Membership Categories
\$20.00 individual;
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For information on joining and a membership form, email Membership@IPAW.org

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If there is no membership expiration date on your address label, you are not yet a member - please join!