

Our Work



My name is Briana Heller and for my Girl Scout Gold Award project I decided to address the threat of invasive plants in my area. At Round Mountain in Stanton NJ, the invasive plant multiflora rose has taken over large patches of forest. Its origin in these areas is considered to have started after agriculture disturbed the environment leaving it vulnerable to invasives. The plants in the area where we worked were originally around six feet tall. Over the course of the summer of 2019 we took out these plants and put up a deer enclosure. The extraction was difficult due to the thorns on the plant and its thick roots. Once able to cut at the base of the vines, the plant could be pulled out. This plant is a danger to our local ecosystems since it covers the forest floor making it so tree saplings and other native plants do not have the sunlight or space to grow. Forests at the site have many old trees and few saplings as there has not been an opportunity for these young plants to grow. In forests like this, once the older plants die there will be no younger generation plants to take their place. Thus the multiflora rose will cover the land where the forest was. Forests that hikers and animals use to enjoy would then be gone. Eradication of this plant is essential in maintaining a healthy forest environment for years to come.



What can you do?

The biggest effort needed to prevent the spread of invasives is avoiding planting them in your yard. Furthermore, if there is already an issue with invasives in your yard, it is important to take steps towards removal. Projects like my Gold Award are not hard to start and very easy to be a part of. By getting involved in local environmental committees through your township or supporting organizations, these plants will be eradicated. More info on Readington Township open space and the environmental committee can be found here :

<https://www.readingtontwpnj.gov/osab-home>

<https://www.readingtontwpnj.gov/boards>

Briana Heller
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Plant Invasive Species in NJ

What are Invasives?

Invasive plants are plants that are non-native to an environment and can generally cause harm from their spread. In NJ there are a number of invasive species like multiflora rose, mile a minute, garlic mustard and more. While the effects of each species varies, one major issue readily seen is the harming of native plants, which causes loss of biodiversity and alteration of ecosystems. Discussed in this pamphlet will be the negative effects of specific invasive plants encountered in one native species removal project in Readington Township NJ.

NJ Invasive Plants



Invasive plants cause disturbances in native ecosystems as they push out native plants. The first picture shown to the left displays an invasive plant named multiflora rose which is a major invasive in NJ. The spread of this plant creates a monoculture which takes up space where natives could grow (NJDEP). It also blocks sunlight for low ground plants causing them to die. It is a thorn bush as well, which makes it hard for animals and hikers to move through. For better identification of the plant the third photo down to the left displays its leaves. One method of eradication of this species is constant trimmings of the plant. When cut at the base the thorn covered vines die. If continuously cut back multiflora rose will eventually disappear.



The plant shown directly to the left is Japanese honeysuckle. This invasive plant is a vine that can wrap around other plants to cover the forest floor. When wrapping around other plants it can cause too much weight or tension on branches that causes the plant to die (NJDEP). When covering the forest floor, it can take over ground areas so that other plants cannot grow. It also will dig its roots into soil enough that other plants cannot grow including native bushes, grasses, and trees. The threat to native NJ species was exhibited at one site in Readington NJ, the bottom of round mountain in Stanton NJ. The invasives mentioned above were eradicated in this area through the use of clipping and mowing. Similar techniques can be used to eradicate these plants in your own yard. More information about removal can be found on the back of this pamphlet.



Works Cited: "Invasive Species Fact Sheet." *NJDEP New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection*, NJDEP, 2009, www.nj.gov/dep/njisc/Factsheets/.