



WNY PRISM

Partnering to Protect Western New York from Invasive Species

Spring 2018 Newsletter

Vol. 4 Issue 1

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The WNY PRISM mission is to proactively identify, evaluate and address invasive species priorities in western New York using a coordinated partnership of local professionals, organizations and private citizens to improve, restore and protect local aquatic and terrestrial resources.

WNY PRISM Lending Library

WNY PRISM works hard to fulfill the many requests we receive for educational programming and outreach assistance, but regional demand continues to far outweigh our capacity. To help address this, WNY PRISM has developed a Lending Library. The Lending Library contains wonderful outreach materials that partners can borrow for events such as fairs or festivals, or other educational efforts. Current items included in the Lending Library are WNY PRISM's Emerald Ash Borer



Patricia Shulenburg, 2016 E&O Assistant, shows off the EAB Costume. Photo by WNY PRISM.

(EAB) Costume and laminated invasive species display posters, as part of WNY PRISM Display Kits.

The EAB Costume is a great resource for outreach events involving youth and can be borrowed for individual events. The Display Kits provide a wide-range of invasive species information and effective messaging, featuring a large (30" x 40") general information poster including information on

invasive species threats and actions citizens can take, along with a series of smaller posters (11" x 15") that focus on a species or issues. Display kits can be borrowed for longer periods of times, to accommodate County Fairs or events such as various awareness weeks or school curriculum. The smaller posters feature some of WNY PRISM's early detection and priority species, but also includes other topics such as iMapInvasives.

Buffalo Audubon Society borrowed a WNY PRISM Display Kit for use at the 2017 Wyoming County Fair. To better highlight the connection between birds and invasive species, we created two new posters for the event. One identifies Invasive Bird Species and the second, highlights the negative effect invasive species have on birds.

WNY PRISM plans to continue to expand the Lending Library. If there are other materials, resources or poster topics you would like to see become part of our Lending Library, please let us know!

The Lending Library, along with borrowing instructions, can be found on our website: wnyprism.org/resources/education.



Project Update: Niagara Escarpment Preserve

WNY PRISM works closely with partners on high priority invasive species management and habitat restoration projects throughout the region. One of the first projects WNY PRISM became involved with is the restoration at Niagara Escarpment Preserve. Owned and managed by the Western New York Land Conservancy, this 36-acre property includes hardwood forest with several beautiful spring ephemerals and restored grassland habitat.

In 2014, WNY PRISM began work at the preserve by conducting a survey of invasive species, an essential first step towards effective management. Removal work followed in 2015 and continued through 2017. The WNY PRISM Crew spent



Spring Beauty (*Claytonia virginica*), photographed at the preserve. Photo by WNY PRISM.

one or two days each year removing multiple target species including *Phragmites*, reed canarygrass, purple loosestrife, pale swallow-wort and invasive shrub species. The Land Conservancy has also used prescribed fire within the grassland restoration to improve the effectiveness of invasive species removal efforts and to encourage the growth of native plants. Efforts have been very successful with infestations visibly smaller each year.



Spring Wildflower Hike at the preserve, 2014. Photo by WNY PRISM.

Work will continue at the preserve this summer. The WNY PRISM Crew plans to spend three days doing follow-up treatments on infestations previously treated and will begin managing the Canada thistle present in the grassland.

Partner Spotlight: Great Lakes *Phragmites* Collaborative

Phragmites Adaptive Management Framework - Data-Driven Treatment Guidance

Phragmites australis, also known as common reed, is an invasive herbaceous plant found in every contiguous state in the United States. It is disturbance adapted, thriving in ditches and along roadsides, but has also invaded natural wetlands and shorelines. *Phragmites* displaces native plants and wildlife species, and inhibits recreational activities such as swimming, boating and fishing. It also alters flooding patterns.

The Great Lakes *Phragmites* Collaborative (GLPC) was formed in 2012 to reduce the spread and occurrence of *Phragmites* throughout the Great Lakes Basin (GLB). The collaborative brings land managers, property owners, researchers and municipalities together to address the widespread impacts of *Phragmites*. GLPC is a resource center for biological information, best management practices, and past and current research, all of which is regularly updated by a team of staff and advisory and steering committees, of which WNY PRISM is part.

Recognition of the need to improve effectiveness and efficiency of *Phragmites* management on a landscape scale led to the development of the *Phragmites* Adaptive Management Framework (PAMF) in 2017. To begin, the PAMF team developed a basin-wide database to record *Phragmites* infestation data, created unbiased models that adapt to treatment results and established standard monitoring guidelines. As work progressed, property owners and managers were enlisted to implement treatment options recommended by the models, record monitoring approaches and upload data to the PAMF database. The pilot program included 35 participants and 95 management units. The framework, which should be ready for basin-wide participation by summer 2018, will help land managers learn while they contribute to the development of site specific best management practices. A PAMF workshop designed to train land managers on how to best use and contribute to the framework will be held at Tiffet Nature Preserve on June 19.



To learn more, visit: www.greatlakesphragmites.net or find GLPC on Facebook or @GLPhrag

Steering Committee Members

Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Ecology & Environment, Inc.
New York Sea Grant
NYS Department of Environmental
Conservation
NYS Department of Transportation
NYS Certified Nursery and Landscape
Professionals
NYS Parks, Recreation, and Historic
Preservation
The Nature Conservancy
SUNY Buffalo State
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Buffalo
District
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture - Natural
Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Lower
Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Office

Upcoming Events

Spring into Nature Celebration
APR 28; 9am; Iroquois NWR

Bergen Swamp 'Meet & Greet'
APR 28; 4pm; Gillam Grant
Community Center

Great Lakes Action Agenda Meetings:
Lake Erie Work Group
MAY 2; 1pm; Lackawanna Library
SW Lake Ontario Work Group
MAY 3; 9am; Tinker Nature Park

Buffalo March for Science Fair
MAY 12; 1pm; Canalside

iMap Spring Blitz Training
MAY 31; 9:30am; Iroquois NWR

*More information can be found on our
website and is sent through the listserv.*

Subscribe to the WNY PRISM Listserv!

[http://www.wnyprism.org/join-
listserv/](http://www.wnyprism.org/join-listserv/)

Early Detection Program Update

The WNY PRISM Early Detection Program includes important tools and resources necessary for the effective management of newly emerging invasive species within the regional landscape. 2017 had an increase in the number of new reports, reaffirming the importance of early detection efforts. WNY PRISM's program includes resources for early detection reporting and infestation assessment, and resources to meet the need for species removal and management, sometimes referred to as rapid response. Mile-a-minute vine, Japanese stiltgrass, water hyacinth, and water lettuce all had new infestations reported in 2017. When new reports come in, WNY PRISM and partners work together to assess the infestation.



Japanese stiltgrass infestation, reported in 2017.
Photographed in Erie County. Photo by WNY PRISM.

Entering 2018, fifteen sites (including five species) have been identified for early detection monitoring. One site was removed from the annual monitoring list this year because the species has not been seen on-site for five years. This site will shift to monitoring every other year.

Monitoring sites include those where priority species have been reported in the past, but do not include the planned surveys of lands surrounding the known sites. The WNY PRISM Crew and partners will survey areas adjacent to, and along known pathways of spread, to gain a better understanding of the full distribution of each species.



Water hyacinth has been reported in Erie and Niagara Counties in each of the last four years. Photos were taken of a new infestation reported in 2017, on Unity Island. Photos by WNY PRISM.

News & Notes

- The New York State Departments of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Agriculture and Markets (DAM) announced the release of the draft Invasive Species Comprehensive Management Plan for public comment. The proposed plan is designed to minimize the introduction, establishment, and spread of invasive species throughout New York. Comments will be accepted through June 1, 2018. For more information, see WNY PRISM's [latest news section](#).
- WNY PRISM has hired 9 seasonal staff to assist with new and ongoing projects. Staff include 2 Invasive Species Management Assistants, 1 Education and Outreach Assistant, 2 Watercraft Inspection Stewards, and as part of the Great Lakes Slender False Brome Working Group, 3 Survey and Monitoring Interns, and 1 GIS and Outreach Specialist.
- The WNY PRISM Boot Brush Station Pilot Project has seed collected from below Boot Brush Stations currently being grown out in the SUNY Buffalo State Greenhouse. This project will help determine the effectiveness of Boot Brush Stations as a prevention tool.
- The WNY PRISM 2017 Annual Report and 2018 Annual Work Plan are available for download on our website, in the news and reports section: wnyprism.org/about/news.



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WNY PRISM



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WNY PRISM Awarded USFS Grant

WNY PRISM has been awarded a U.S. Forest Service grant through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Cooperative Weed Management Areas Grant Program. The project, Priority Lands Invasive Species Removal and Volunteer Monitoring Program, is a collaborative effort between WNY PRISM and the WNY Land Conservancy.

As part of this project WNY PRISM will work to remove invasive shrub species from five preserves in Erie and Niagara Counties. The Land Conservancy will assist with efforts while leading the development of a volunteer monitoring network. Volunteers will be trained to survey and monitor preserves before and after invasive species management and habitat restoration has taken place.



Common buckthorn, a target species for the Priority Lands project. Photo by WNY PRISM.

Species Profile: Water Lettuce

Water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*) is a floating aquatic plant that resembles an open head of lettuce. Leaves are light green, softly hairy, and thick with parallel veins and scalloped edges. Rosettes are connected by underwater stems, and feathery roots hang below. Inconspicuous flowers form small green berries. Water lettuce is unlikely to be confused with any other floating plant.

An early detection priority for WNY, water lettuce can spread rapidly to form mats that make recreation nearly impossible while also limiting biodiversity and blocking sunlight from reaching submerged plants. It also lowers oxygen content, limiting habitat for fish.



Water lettuce, found in Erie County. Photo by NYS DEC.

Water lettuce can be spread by boats or fishing equipment, as well as by escaping water gardens. To help prevent the spread of this species, clean boats and equipment before moving locations, and be Plantwise by planting native and non-invasive plants in your gardens. Management for water lettuce includes manual removal for small infestations, and mechanical harvesters for larger ones.

Visit our [water lettuce profile](#) for more on how to identify and manage this species. Please report any sightings to WNY PRISM using our [Early Detection Reporting Protocol](#).