



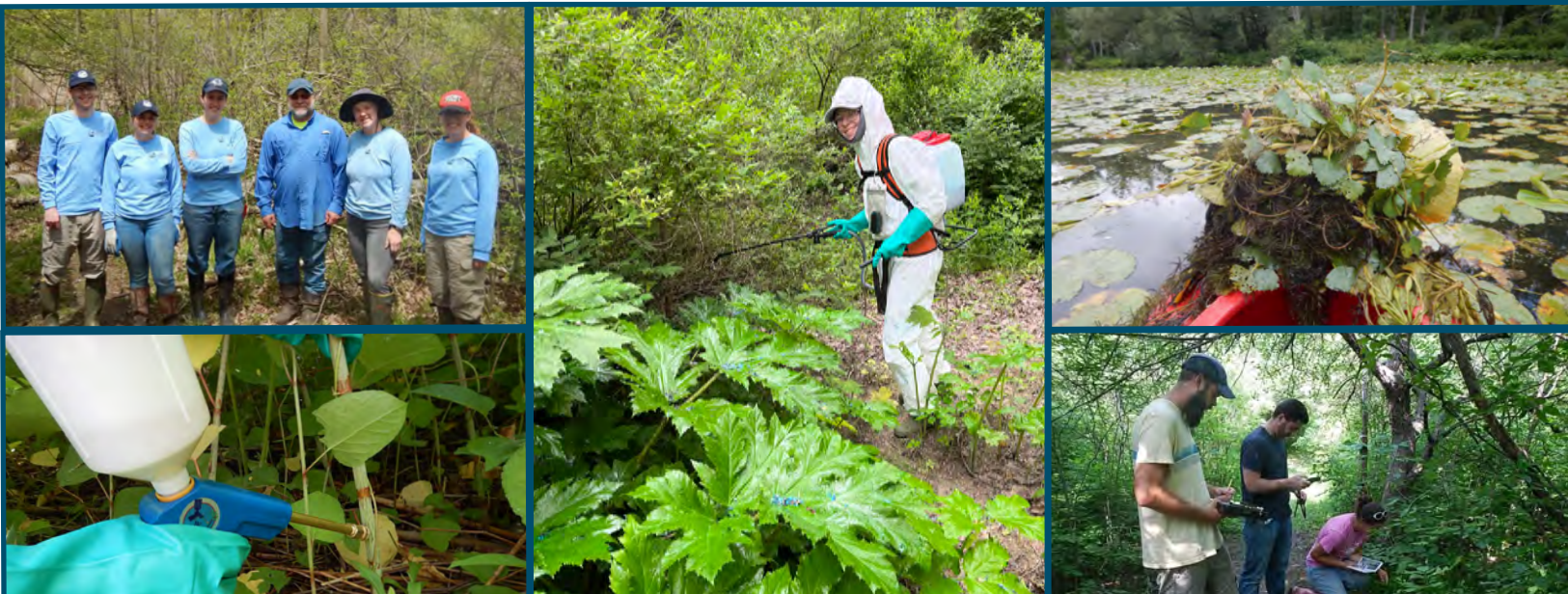
# WNY PRISM

Partnering to Protect Western New York  
from Invasive Species



Fall 2023 Newsletter

*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 community members to improve, restore and protect local aquatic and terrestrial resources.*



## Celebrating 10 Years of the WNY PRISM Crew Assistance Program!

WNY PRISM is celebrating ten years of our Crew Assistance Program – ten years of great partnerships, projects, success and fun, and we're excited to be celebrating with you!

The WNY PRISM Crew Assistance Program was established in 2014 (along with our office!) with the goal to build relationships with regional partners, to improve the success of management activities, and increase regional capacity for projects through sharing of resources and expertise. We also wanted to be additive, to provide our partners with the assistance needed to help move projects forward that otherwise wouldn't have been possible – those projects where a few extra hands could make the most difference. But most of all, we wanted to work *with* our partners. The Crew Assistance Program (CAP) offers valuable opportunities for partners to work alongside WNY PRISM's experienced staff and trained seasonal crew to learn about invasive species management and gain experience with various data collection protocols, removal tools and methods, and to see firsthand how strategies including adaptive management and integrated pest management are used to achieve long-term success with invasive species management.

During the first couple years of the program (2014-2015), WNY PRISM actively sought partners and jointly developed projects on which to work. We did a lot of invasive species surveys in those days! But the popularity of the program grew quickly and partner requests for assistance soon outpaced our ability to help. In response,

## Crew Assistance Program

ahead of the 2016 season we developed a process for partners to submit proposals that would be prioritized and selected based on established criteria. This allowed us to assess each project for how well it met our program goals and the overall WNY PRISM mission and priorities, and to fairly make difficult decisions on what projects we'd be able to work on.

From 2016-2023, WNY PRISM received 123 project proposals, averaging fifteen per year. The fewest we received was eight, in 2017, and the most was twenty, in 2019. Proposals have been received from thirty-six different partners for projects in all eight of our counties, the most

WNY PRISM received 123 CAP proposals from 2016 through 2022, completing 105 projects!

of which being for projects within Erie (51), Chautauqua (24) and Niagara (22) counties. Eighty-nine project proposals involved removal, thirty-two involved surveys and two focused on native plant restoration. WNY PRISM

selected and completed 105 projects from 2016-2023. Partners recognized WNY PRISM's efforts through social media posts, organizational newsletters and press releases in local newspapers.

With 105 amazing projects to choose from it's hard to pick just a few to highlight, but those that stand out most are the ones that allowed the Crew to work alongside our partners in some of the most unique locations and plant communities that can be found here in western New York. Our staff and partners were able to learn from one another and especially rewarding was to see those efforts be leveraged for, or transitioned to, new projects that may not have otherwise been implemented.

We are so proud of the work that has been accomplished over the last ten years, and we are looking forward to many more great projects in the future. If you're interested in learning more about the CAP, visit our website: [www.wnyprism.org/programs/crew-assistance-program/](http://www.wnyprism.org/programs/crew-assistance-program/). There you can find information on past projects and see our selection criteria. We'll be releasing the request for proposals in early December for 2024, so if you haven't started thinking of a project, now's the time!

## Keep a Lookout!

There is still time to be on the lookout for spotted lanternfly (SLF) this fall...until that hard freeze!

What to do if you find SLF:

- Take **good quality photos** of the insect or egg masses and, if possible, include something for size reference.
- If able, **collect the insect** in a bag and freeze, or in a jar with rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer. If there are other SLF nearby, please squish and make a wish that you don't see more!
- **Immediately report SLF** and its location (street address, intersecting roads, GPS coordinates) here: [www.agriculture.ny.gov/reportSLF](http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/reportSLF) (or to iMapInvasives if you already have an account).

Next up will be hemlock woolly adelgid this winter. Join our team of community scientists to help survey and map this species! For details, email [wnyprism@buffalostate.edu](mailto:wnyprism@buffalostate.edu).

## Join WNY PRISM in Celebrating 10 Years of Partnership at our Fall Partner Meeting!

### 2023 Fall Partner Meeting

October 17, 2023; 9:30 am - 12 pm

Tift Nature Preserve

1200 Fuhrmann Boulevard, Buffalo, NY 14203

For more details, go to: <https://www.wnyprism.org/2023-fall-partner-meeting/>.

Page 1 photos (from left to right): 2019 Bergen Partners – WNY PRISM worked at Bergen Swamp alongside Bill Des Jardin, Bergen Swamp Preservation Society Membership Chair, on barberry removal in 2019; knotweed stem injection at Tift Nature Preserve, 2017; giant hogweed treatment along Buffalo Creek, 2023; water chestnut removal, Chautauqua Outlet in 2018; iMap survey at Bergen Swamp, 2014.



## Grants and Funding

- DEC's **Invasive Species Grant Program** is designed to advance projects that target both aquatic and terrestrial invasive species across the state. For details, visit <https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/115742.html>. Applications due: November 1, 2023 by 3pm.
- The U.S. Forest Service **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) Grant Programs** support reforestation, ecosystem restoration and forest health improvement in the Great Lakes Basin. Two opportunities are available: Cooperative Weed Management Areas and Forest Restoration. For details, visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/r9/workingtogether/grants>. Applications due: October 23, 2023 by 6pm.
- DEC's **Community Forest Conservation Grant Program** funds municipal land acquisition for community forests. For details, visit <https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/124345.html>. Applications due: October 11, 2023 by 2pm.
- The Northeastern Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Center is accepting applications for their **IPM Partnership Grants Program** and **Pest Management Strategic Plans and Production/Management Profiles Grants Program**. For details, visit <https://www.northeastipm.org/about-us/publications/ipm-insights/northeastern-ipm-center-opens-2024-call-for-proposals/>. Applications due: November 9, 2023 by 5pm.

## Invasive Species Profile: Starry Stonewort

Starry stonewort (*Nitellopsis obtusa*) is an aquatic macroalgae that can form dense mats on the lake bottom. While western New York does have native plants that look similar, starry stonewort can be identified by the white star-shaped bulbils at the nodes of the root-like rhizoids which are the algae's namesake.

As there is only evidence of male individuals of starry stonewort in North America, the species spreads asexually primarily through fragmentation or bulbils produced beneath the sediment. The bulbils are produced all throughout the summer but become obvious in late summer. The dense mats formed by starry stonewort populations can outcompete native plants in the area, reducing biodiversity and potentially impacting the spawning activity of some species of fish. These mats can also prevent boaters and swimmers from recreational activities.

Management of starry stonewort is possible, but



Starry stonewort's gelatinous branches, rhizoids and star-shaped bulbils.

can be difficult. Control options include hand-pulling, mechanical harvesting, diver-assisted suction harvesting (DASH), and chemical algaecides. Manual and mechanical removal can be problematic due to the species' ability to spread through fragmentation and care must be taken to prevent this. The benefits of DASH are that it is selective, avoids creating fragments and has shown promise in effectively reducing the biomass of an

infestation (Davis, 2023). Chemical algaecides have been shown to effectively reduce the biomass of an infestation, although they do not reduce the viability of bulbils, so spread remains a concern.

The current best tool against starry stonewort is spread prevention, so please remember to Clean, Drain and Dry!

Reference: Davis, L. (2023, April). *Starry Stonewort and its Management on Keuka Lake*. Presented at WNY PRISM Spring Partner Meeting, Blasdell, NY.

# The Ecological Research Institute's Monitoring and Managing Ash Program

Written by: Jonathan Rosenthal, Ecological Research Institute

*The MaMA program enables detection of "lingering ash" – trees that remain healthy years after virtually all the nearby native ash have been killed by emerald ash borer (EAB). Lingered ash provide hope for ash conservation because selective breeding of such trees can yield highly EAB-resistant native ash. WNY PRISM is now partnering with ERI in implementing MaMA in the region, and there are many ways in which you can participate!*

Emerald ash borer (EAB) has spread through much of Western New York, killing nearly all the native ash trees in areas where it has been long established.

In such circumstances, it is easy to give up on ash. However, the Monitoring and Managing Ash (MaMA) program of the Ecological Research Institute (ERI) provides hope for ash conservation by facilitating detection of "lingering ash" – native, naturally occurring, mature trees that remain healthy years after virtually all the nearby mature ash have been killed by emerald ash borer (EAB). U.S. Forest Service scientists and their collaborators have shown that material from lingering ash can be used for selective breeding to yield highly EAB-resistant trees. Importantly, lingering ash have been found for all three widespread native Northeastern ash species: white, green, and black.

In MaMA, participants take actions that enable lingering ash to be detected and reported. These include contributing data that determine where and when to search for lingering ash, reporting lingering ash found, and integrating the search for lingering ash into overall ash/EAB management strategies. Crucially, in areas where virtually all ash have been killed, instead of giving up on ash, there is the urgent need to search for lingering trees. Moreover, other steps need to be taken in areas where high ash mortality has not yet occurred, so that searches can be conducted there when this eventually occurs.

MaMA has already revealed over 40 lingering ash in the Hudson Valley and adjacent Catskills, where the program has been established since 2018. Now, it plays a prominent role in the Tree Species in Peril collaborative initiative led by The Nature

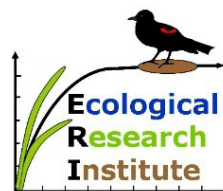
Conservancy in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service, through which its implementation is being extended throughout New York and New England.



Lingering ash in area with almost 100% ash mortality. Photo Credit: Radka Wildova, ERI.

On August 25th, 2023, ERI presented a MaMA training workshop, funded by TNC, at Letchworth State Park in collaboration with WNY PRISM and New York State Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation. Participants included conservation professionals as well as private landowners and community scientists. In it, we explored the important roles that everyone can play in this program. This event is only the beginning of our partnership with WNY PRISM in implementing MaMA widely in Western New York.

For more information on MaMA, please visit [www.MonitoringAsh.org](http://www.MonitoringAsh.org) or contact [outreach@monitoringash.org](mailto:outreach@monitoringash.org).



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WNY PRISM



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# Boot Brush Stations: Preventing the Spread of Invasive Species

Give invasive species the brush off! Boot brush stations are a great way to prevent the spread of invasive species along trails and in natural areas. Simple to use, they serve to educate the public on the impact of invasive species, and what steps can be taken as individuals to spread the word, not the species.

Since 2016, WNY PRISM has worked with PlayCleanGo and local partners to install 47 boot brush stations in local parks, preserves and other natural areas throughout western New York. Boot brush stations are installed at trailheads or other frequently used locations where they are easy to spot. They offer hikers a convenient way to brush off seeds, dirt, and other fragments that might stick to the treads of their shoes, which helps prevent the spread of invasive species.

WNY PRISM wanted to find out how the boot brush stations were faring, and to see which invasive species were present in the areas surrounding them and along adjacent trails. Towards the end of the 2023 field season, WNY PRISM surveyed all the established boot brush stations to assess their condition and maintenance needs, and to survey for invasive species nearby. Invasive species surveys were completed within a 10-foot radius of each boot brush station and along 100 feet of adjacent trails.

WNY PRISM plans to survey boot brush stations every few years. The data will provide an increased understanding of boot brush station use and will help improve placement. It will also show which invasive species are present and most likely to be spread, how this changes over time, and give us more insight into boot brush station effectiveness as a prevention tool. To learn more about WNY PRISM's Boot Brush Station Program, go to <https://www.wnyprism.org/programs/boot-brush-stations/>.

## Help Protect Our Lands!

When you recreate outdoors, take these simple steps to prevent the spread of invasive species!

- Stop at a boot brush station before your next outing and learn about invasive species to keep a lookout for!
- Use the boot brush station or a hand-held brush to clean your footwear before and after hiking.
- Check your clothing, gear, pets and any equipment you brought with you, and remove any seeds, mud and other materials before and after recreating.
- Take the [Pledge to Protect Your Lands!](#)



Boot brush station installed at Onondaga Escarpment State Unique Area in 2023.



Lindsay Piotrowski, Survey and Monitoring Technician, surveying a boot brush station.

## WNY PRISM Steering Committee Members

Cornell Cooperative Extension - Erie County | Great Lakes Center - SUNY Buffalo State University  
New York Sea Grant | NYS Department of Environmental Conservation - Great Lakes Program  
NYS Department of Transportation | NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Royal Fern Nursery | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Buffalo District  
U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Lower Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office