What is an Urban Weed Warrior?

Urban Weed Warriors (UWW's) are trained by the Bureau of Parks to help with invasive plant removal. Volunteers help pull and cut weeds in organized invasive removal days, or work on their own in a park close to them. By attending a training session, UWW's learn about non-native invasive plants in Baltimore City parks. The session also covers native alternatives for use in your own backyard. After the training session, UWW's are certified to help remove these problem species from city parks.

The first training session is scheduled for March 15, 2005 from 4-6pm, at the Recreation and Parks Headquarters, 3001 East Drive, and training will be ongoing throughout the spring and summer. For more information contact:

Janelle Burke
Urban Weed Warrior Program Coordinator
410-396-0359
weeds@baltimorecity.gov

Other proposed training sessions:

- **March 26, 2005**, 10am-noon, Druid Hill Conservatory
- **April 21, 2005**, 5:30pm-7:30pm, Herring Run Watershed Association, 3545 Bel Air Rd
- **May 10, 2005**, 5pm-7pm, Carrie Murray Nature Center
- **May 28, 2005**, 10am-noon, Leakin Park trail office, Herb Festival (fee to enter festival)
- **June 15, 2005**, 5:30pm-7:30pm, Recreation and Parks Administrative Building, 3001 East Drive, Druid Hill Park

Please contact our Program Coordinator ahead of time to confirm your attendance!

Learn more about invasive plants:

www.invasivespecies.gov
www.nps.gov/plants/alien
www.tncweeds.ucdavis.edu

Baltimore Dept. of Rec. and Parks:

www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/recnparks/home.htm

City of Baltimore
Recreation & Parks

Gwynns Falls Watershed Association

Jones Falls Watershed Association
Making a splash close to home.

Herring Run Watershed Association

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

BELIEVE
in a greener Baltimore

Become an

URBAN WEED WARRIOR

Help improve Baltimore's parks by monitoring and removing the non-native invasive plant species

Baltimore City Recreation & Parks

Park Conservation & Community Outreach
Urban Weed Warrior Program
weeds@baltimorecity.gov
410-396-0359

Baltimore City urban ecology

Before being developed, Baltimore City was predominately piedmont and coastal plain forest. Now, most of the green spaces left in Baltimore are managed parks and open spaces. This urban environment creates disturbed areas along the edges of forests, and increases nutrients and pollution. All these factors lead to an environment where weedy species thrive. Most of the weeds are non-native invasive species. These species of plants are now overrunning our parks, and threatening our native forest ecosystem.

What is a non-native invasive?

Non-native plant species are those that occur outside their native ranges in a given place as a result of actions by humans. Many of these plants were imported for food or landscape purposes. Others mistakenly arrived in shipments of other goods. Invasive plants are characterized by rapid growth, a tendency to grow along edges or disturbed areas, and will establish themselves quickly.

Why are they a problem?

Non-native invasives, or what we commonly think of as weeds, are a problem in our city parks. These plants can shade out, strangle or out-compete our native flora. They have either escaped from gardens or been introduced into the area, and are now disrupting ecosystem functions and threatening biodiversity. They have few predators or diseases to keep them in control. When a limited number of plants species dominate an area, they use the resources that native plants need to grow.

Characteristics of Non-native Invasives:

- Grow fast and mature early
- Become established in an area quickly
- Colonize edges, openings and disturbed places first
- Spread quickly over large areas; thrive in many habitats
- Reproduce profusely by seed and/or vegetative structures
- Survive and reproduce seeds under adverse environmental conditions
- Have few known diseases or pests
- Difficult to remove or control

How do these plants harm our parks?

Many of the weeds that are the biggest concern are vines like English Ivy. Vines can quickly grow up trees, either strangling them by wrapping around, or by climbing to the canopy of the tree. The weight of the vines can cause limbs to fall off and whole trees to fall down. Vines can also create a large tangled mess at the edge of parks, blocking trails and paths.

Invasive trees grow more quickly than many native tree species. Their leaves cause harm by blocking out the sunlight from competing trees. Also, some weedy trees, like the Ailanthus tree, send out shoots from their roots, creating large stands of trees crowding out others.

Herbaceous plants are non-woody and usually grow in the understory. Some examples of weedy herbs are garlic mustard and lesser celandine. The invasive plants we are worried about grow very quickly and can cover entire areas, not allowing any room for our native wildflowers, shrubs or trees to grow on parkland.

The Dirty Dozen

Targeted Weeds in Baltimore City Parks

Garlic Mustard	*Alliaria petiolata*	herb
Japanese Stilt Grass	*Microstegium vimineum*	grass
Asiatic Bittersweet	*Celastrus orbiculatus*	vine
Mile-a-Minute	*Polygonum perfoliatum*	herb/ vine
Multiflora Rose	*Rosa multiflora*	shrub
Tree of Heaven	*Ailanthus altissima*	tree
Japanese Honeysuckle	*Lonicera japonica*	vine
Wineberry	*Rubus phoenicolasius*	shrub
English Ivy	*Hedera helix*	vine
Kudzu	*Pueraria lobata*	vine
Japanese Knotweed	*Polygonum cuspidatum*	herb
Porcelainberry	*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*	vine