

# Managing Invasives

(Excerpts from Nick Fletcher's lecture)

Controlling invasives requires constant vigilance because they have an unfair advantage. Many hardy plants putting out leaves in early spring around March are not native to this part of the country. Invasives reproduce with plentiful berries and/or root systems and rhizomes that take over the soil and choke out native plant root systems. They shade out the native plants before they have a chance to germinate, and as it gets colder these invasives hang on to their leaves longer and keep growing. Berries from ***glossy buckthorn***, ***multiflora rose***, ***garlic mustard***, ***porcelain berry***, ***Virginia creeper***, ***barberry*** and ***privet*** growing in many private properties are eaten by birds and distributed within their flight paths. ***Amber honeysuckle*** actually releases chemicals into the soil to inhibit growth of other species.

You treat invasives right before what's called translocation, when the chlorophyll moves down to the roots, by cutting them close to the base, then dabbing glyphosate, buckthorn blaster or a bingo marker on cut stems. The herbicide will be carried to the roots and kill the invasive very effectively with a very minimal amount of herbicide, less than 1%. If you just dab a little bit with added color dye, then you can see what's been treated or what hasn't been.

We never recommend spraying any of these herbicides into the air because of their highly toxic and carcinogenic properties which can be windblown for miles. But this is something that most gardeners, landscapers and nurseries are still doing. As consumers we must take a stand to mitigate this practice in our own yards for the sake of our environment, wildlife and our own families.

***Tree of Heaven***, a newer proliferative invasive, doesn't need rich soil. If you were to just cut it at the base and treat with herbicide, the tree goes into panic mode and sends up suckers that can spread everywhere. You may inadvertently end up with a yard full of them. Treat it first by "girdling" or ring-barking, the complete removal of bark around the entire circumference of either a branch or trunk. Cut a one inch (2.5 cm.) or more strip of bark off from around the trunk, cutting deep enough to penetrate the hard center of the trunk. Doing this will slowly kill the tree over a period of a year or two and reduces the chances of the tree producing suckers. Then come back later and cut it at the base and dab with herbicide. You want to have some green on the plant to translocate the herbicide into the root, so once you've cut it at the base, let it flush growth again and re-treat with herbicide.

The tree of heaven is also the host plant of ***Spotted Lanternfly***, which is one of the new invasive insects that is getting attention. There are over 65 other potential host trees including hickory, maple, pine, poplar, red oak, walnut, willow along with fruit trees, hops and grape vines. Both adult and nymph stages feed on their host plants. There are no known biological controls and no evidence that native predatory or parasitic insects help manage lanternfly populations. This insect creates threat to grape, hops, orchard and lumber industries.

When disposing of invasives cut at the base before they seed, cut into smaller pieces, let it rot by leaving it on asphalt to die before disposal. Do not leave them in the woods or bury it. This will cause it to re-root or germinate the following year.