

News for the Neighbors of Dusty Goldenrod Preserve

June 2023

Preserve activities since the last newsletter (July 2022)

- Have you seen volunteers with a tripod out in the Preserve? An extensive survey is being performed of the flora in Dusty Goldenrod Preserve. The tripod mounted GPS is being used to record the location of both the rare and newly identified species as well as the location of invasive plants.
- Volunteers have put in a number of hours removing invasive plants, mostly Narrow Leaf Bittercress but also Canada thistle and Garlic Mustard. See the continuing series on invasives in this newsletter.
- A test plot was set up to test the effectiveness of different methods of combating the invasive Lesser Celandine. The methods used were hand pulling, spray with vinegar, clipping the plants at ground level, and burning with a torch. Effectiveness of any one of these methods will not be known for a few years. Lesser Celandine is a major threat to the Preserve. One area that last year was approximately 100 sq. ft. has grown to more than three times that size this year.
- The Preserve's Bluebird boxes had a nesting pair with four eggs.



- Water Quality monitoring in the Preserve showed as in previous years Stream 2, which runs south to north at the east end of Hawthorne Road, had high levels of ammonia during the fall and into winter. This high level of ammonia is a result of excessive amounts of leaves from yards that have piled up on the stream bank. The leaves wash into the stream and quickly break down producing ammonia (nitrates). The good news is the level is lower than previous years, still excessive, but lower and the quantity of leaves was reduced. For the last 2 years the culvert carrying the stream to the Preserve did not clog up with leaves. Yeah neighbors! Thanks for keeping leaves away from the stream bank.

What is planned to date for 2023

- Continued monitoring plants in and around the deer exclosures.
- Continued water quality monitoring of 5 streams that flow through the Preserve.
- Continued removal of invasive species including a patch of Reed Canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) recently found in the eastern part of the Preserve.

Other items

- Dumping of grass clippings into the Preserve has been reduced, especially on the southern edge ☺ but there is still dumping of yard waste ☹ along the borders of the Preserve. Please ensure that your landscapers are not dumping into the Preserve - thank you! Just imagine if your neighbors dumped their grass clippings into your yard.
- A reminder about **poison ivy**. There are numerous spots along the walkway between Bishop Road and Highland Heights Park that have poison ivy growing, typically near and up a tree. All parts of the plant even the woody vines that may appear dead are poisonous. **Tick season** is now. Be sure to wear protective clothing. Applying a DEET based product is effective for keeping ticks away but a tick inspection after visiting the Preserve should be performed.

Invasive plants in the Preserve

Just a reminder of why invasive plants are a reason for concern:

- Crowd out native plants, reducing biodiversity and resilience to climate change.
- Don't provide the same benefits as natives to native wildlife, disrupting the food chain.
- Are costly and time consuming to control/remove from local greenspace.
- Can lead to increased erosion along streams since they often have shallower root systems.

Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)



Garlic mustard grows up to three feet high and takes two years to complete its lifecycle. It grows young leaves in its first season, which it keeps over winter, and then flowers in the spring of its second year. This plant spreads its seeds and gains a foothold in fields and forests by emerging earlier in spring than many native plants. By the time native species are ready to grow, garlic mustard has blocked their sunlight and outcompeted them for moisture and vital nutrients. Because the understory of a forest is so important for insects and other species at the bottom of the food chain, invaders like garlic mustard can weaken the entire ecosystem. Further, garlic mustard's roots release chemicals that alter the important underground network of fungi that connect nutrients between native plants, inhibiting the growth of important species like trees. The good news is that you can pull it and then eat it. Young plants are easily edible but older ones contain cyanide and should be thoroughly cooked.

Dame's Rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)



Yes, these nice looking flowers are an invasive. Dame's Rocket became a cultivated ornamental garden favorite, but is now considered invasive as it is difficult to get rid of, heavily over seeds and crowds out native plants. Dame's rocket forms monocultures that replace native plants which in turn reduces critical food resources for birds, butterflies, and other wild creatures. Dame's rocket is a biennial (2-year life cycle), a similar growing cycle to garlic mustard. It is a low rosette the first year and stays green all winter. The second year, dame's rocket bolts to 2-4 feet tall and produces clusters of flowers. After flowering, dame's rocket will produce long, thin, dark-colored seed pods. **More invasives in the next issue**

You may have received a mailing regarding the workshops *Protecting our Streams & Wetlands, A Resident's Guide to Community Policies*. Not gotten the mailing? Here is a link to the information regarding the workshops: <https://tinyurl.com/47zjrzy> If you have asked yourself what could I do to improve our environment this is an excellent opportunity.

Hopefully this letter is informative, and makes you feel connected to the great natural asset located right here in your neighborhood. For more information visit: <https://www.friendsofeuclidcreek.com>

Sincerely,
Friends of Euclid Creek