

IN THIS ISSUE ...

- ∞ Introduction
- ∞ Eradicating Oriental Bittersweet
- ∞ Glastonbury's Green Initiatives Program

BATTLING BITTERSWEET



The Town of Glastonbury



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Please consider the environment before printing a copy of this bulletin. The information will remain available on our web site.

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of non-native plants to the environment in Connecticut has been problematic for many years. In Glastonbury, one culprit, the Oriental Bittersweet vine, can be seen throughout the Connecticut River Valley as it takes a stranglehold on mature native trees that line our streets, grace town parks and beautify homeowner's yards.



Oriental Bittersweet continues to thrive even after killing this Silver Maple tree that once served an important function along the Connecticut River Bank. Photos on this page courtesy of Dick Rowley, Glastonbury Partners in Planting.

ERADICATING ORIENTAL BITTERSWEET

Working with [Glastonbury Partners in Planting, Inc.](#) (GPIP), the Town provided a three-acre demonstration plot in the Riverfront Park for the "Battling Bittersweet" work day. More than eighty volunteers and Town staff worked together to cut, remove and treat the Bittersweet vines. What was once a dense jungle of invasive Bittersweet has been transformed into a much healthier stand of trees in the flood plain of the Connecticut River.



Tour of invasive plants held at Riverfront Park in 2013 with Parks and Recreation Director Ray Purtell and various members of Glastonbury Partners in Planting.

The Good



While it might not be spotted locally, American Bittersweet is non-invasive. Photo courtesy of US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Bad



Oriental Bittersweet, prevalent in Glastonbury, is highly invasive. Photo courtesy of Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut.

The Ugly



Oriental Bittersweet vines strangle tree trunks, climb to the top and take over the canopy, destroying the trees. Photo courtesy of GPIIP.

Most importantly, countless Glastonbury residents have been made aware of the problems associated with the invasive non-native plants. Armed with new knowledge, they are now better prepared to wage war on these invaders on their own properties.

For more information about “Battling Bittersweet,” visit the following web sites:

- [Glastonbury Partners in Planting, Inc.](http://gpip.org/invasives.htm)
<http://gpip.org/invasives.htm>
- [Plant Conservation Alliance](http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/ceor1.htm)
<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/ceor1.htm>
- [Minnesota Department of Agriculture](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants/badplants/orientalbittersweet/bittersweetdiffs.aspx)
<http://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants/badplants/orientalbittersweet/bittersweetdiffs.aspx>

GLASTONBURY’S GREEN INITIATIVES PROGRAM

Glastonbury’s Green Initiatives program operates under the direction of the Town Manager. The committee is chaired by the Purchasing Agent and the Superintendent of Sanitation. Committee members from across Town departments participate and contribute ideas and suggestions committed to a “greener” community.

The committee assembles information about products and services and makes the information available to specific departments that can evaluate them and develop applications in Town projects with the approval of the Town Manager.

These “Go-Green” bulletins contain information about the results of product evaluations and other accomplishments of Town departments. We hope this information can provide you insight to the Town’s green initiatives and also lead others in the community to find ways to use environmentally preferable products. Please contact us if we can help you with further information or if you have additional suggestions. ■

“Special thanks and appreciation are due to Glastonbury Partners in Planting, Inc. for their leadership on this important emerging issue.”

– Ray Purtell

