

LIISMA Highlights
September 24, 2009
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Riverhead, NY

1. July 30, 2009 Meeting – highlights approved

2. Roundtable Announcements –

The Nature Conservancy – Marilyn Jordan – There are two new invasive plants to be on the lookout for. False-brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*) was found in Bergen Swamp (in western New York), and is known to displace native species and colonizes many habitat types. Wavyleaf Basketgrass (*Oplismenus hirtellus ssp. undulatifolius*) has been found in Maryland, and has been found to out-compete other aggressive invasives such as Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*).

On September 30, 2009 the LIISMA Scientific Review Committee is going to Heckscher Park to see the *Miscanthus* infestation before the SRC meeting. LIISMA members are invited to join in for the field trip. If interested contact Gary Lawton at Gary.Lawton@oprhp.state.ny.us.

Central Pine Barrens Commission – Ann Carter – The Pine Barrens Commission has held numerous volunteer events controlling invasive species (stiltgrass & swallow-wort in Wertheim, mile-a-minute vine in Warbler Woods, and mugwort in the Westhampton SCWA demonstration garden). These efforts build on past volunteer events, and Student Conservation Association invasive control efforts.

NYS Department of Ag & Markets – Joe Parent – During nursery inspections the department has found mile-a-minute vine invading some nurseries, which could result in contaminated nursery stock. This is no surprise as it is believed to have been introduced to many areas this way. Chrysanthemum white rust has been found to be an increasing problem this year. Asian long-horned beetle has been limited to 6 trees this year in Queens. The project seems to be successful so far. The Islip quarantine area has been treated three times and it is hoped to be deregulated in two years.

Town of East Hampton – Lisa D’Andrea and Andrew Gaites – Town Parks has been working on keeping invasives out of their preserves, but mile-a-minute vine has been found in newly cleared areas on and near parks. It seems that mile-a-minute is being more frequently introduced as a tag-along with native nursery stock.

Cornell Cooperative Extension – Andy Senesac – Andy (or someone else) will give a presentation of the status of mile-a-minute vine biocontrol at the next LIISMA Meeting. Current studies show that the biocontrol for mile-a-minute vine is safe. The weevil is available in the Northeast, but has not yet been widely introduced in NY (released at one site in the Hudson Valley). CCE may begin the process of applying for a biocontrol release permit.

Cornell Cooperative Extension – Alexis Alvey – The Alternatives to Invasives Plant List is moving along. The draft list is complete and the committee has met three times so far.

The alternatives demonstration garden is up and running at CCE’s Long Island Horticultural Research and Extension Center at 3059 Sound Avenue, Riverhead. It contains many of the non-invasive alternatives and is intended for education and outreach. Cornell recently held their first tour of the garden, with many industry professionals.

Friday November 20 will be the Managing Landscapes Sustainably Conference. If interested in attending, contact Alexis at: aaa34@cornell.edu

US Department of Agriculture – Steve Clark – USDA Plant Protections and Quarantine trapped only for Asian Gypsy Moths this year. Captured moths were sent to a laboratory for genetic testing. This fall they will be testing 600 trees to see if fall treatments are more effective than spring treatments.

There is an effort to ban the use of Cat. 1 and 2 herbicides (restricted use) in NYS. This could impact invasive species work and may be worth LIISMA investigating.

NYS Department of Transportation – Rich Gass – The LIE overpass at Halsey Manor Rd. was found to be infested with swallow-wort. Control actions have not yet been determined. Loosestrife infestations have been found to be increasing in abundance along DoT rights-of-way.

The Nature Conservancy – Kathy Schwager – Water chestnut removal continued this growing season at the US Fish and Wildlife Service Oyster Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Mill Pond). Hundreds of cubic yards of water chestnut were removed through many volunteer events and hundreds of hours of work by Fish and Wildlife Service staff. The population has not been eradicated, but the huge effort made great progress. Follow up removal is planned for next year.

The DEC Peconic Estuary Program reports that the *Ludwigia* removal efforts on the Peconic were successful again this year. So far the effort has totaled 13 volunteer events, 130 cubic yards of *Ludwigia* and 2300 person hours logged. Because of the success of previous years, this year there were only 4 cubic yards to be pulled. This year the event was called “Paddle the River.” Volunteers canoed and kayaked the river picking up plants where they were found along the way.

Ailanthus was removed in Cedar Point County Park as part of the Invasive Species Prevention Zone implementation. In a cooperative effort between TNC and Suffolk County Parks a majority of the *Ailanthus* trees in the park were treated. The methods used were cut/stump and hack and squirt, with glyphosate applied to the stumps and cuts. Follow up efforts are planned for future years.

Weed watch out alert: *Microstegium* has been increasing in abundance on Long Island. Keep aware for new infestations. *Microstegium* is most likely to appear in moist soils and in disturbed areas such as roadside and trails. It has been recently found in pristine areas of the Pine Barrens and other natural areas on Long Island. For a fact sheet visit: <http://www.nps.gov/plants/ALIEN/fact/mivi1.htm>

USDA Animal and Plant Health and Inspection Service – Marlene Bombara – The Islip area is being inspected before the Asian Long Horned Beetle (ALB) quarantine is lifted. This requires the inspection of roughly 68,000 trees. If found to be uninfested, the quarantine will be removed.

<http://www.beetlebusters.info/> is the site for outreach on ALB. There has been a tremendous amount of outreach and education across NY State.

Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation District – Polly Weigand – Polly is giving an invasive species training next week. She expects a large number of professionals from the

industry to attend. She is continuing work on the control sheets for invasive plants and hopes to have them done soon.

3. Connetquot River State Park Invasive Species Prevention Zone (ISPZ) - Gary Lawton

Connetquot is an important site for rare plants and high biodiversity. It has been identified by the Natural Heritage Program as a biodiversity "hot spot". Connetquot has been implementing an ISPZ plan for a number of years. It is the first ISPZ designated in the state.

Recent control efforts have been made possible by a Student Conservation Association (SCA) crew. The SCA crew was funded through economic stimulus money and has been actively removing invasives throughout the park with great success. The primary targets for removal have been barberry and wineberry. Many of the worst infestations in the park have been tackled.

The ISPZ designation has been a helpful process not only for planning purposes, but also for leveraging support for controlling invasives at Connetquot within the State Parks.

Cabomba at Belmont Lake – The SCA crew and park staff did a *Cabomba* pull as an experiment to see how effective it would be. In another area of the pond they used a benthic barrier with some success, but because of the costs and environmental concerns it is not an option for the whole lake. They have also used grass carp with some success. They will continue monitoring to measure efficacy of treatments.

State Parks is looking into the possibility of Caumsett SP becoming an ISPZ. State Parks is also looking at Nissequogue Bluff for invasives removal. Although heavily infested, they are planning on removing the invasives in some test areas and seeing if the natives are successful in replacing the invasives. In Sunken Meadow SP, a Long Island Futures Fund grant is being used to study if changes can be made to the dam to restore tidal flow. There are many potential ecological benefits of restoring tidal flow to the creek.

4. Discussion: The future of ISPZs and invasives management in the face of climate change—What is resiliency?

Resiliency is defined as the amount of change or disturbance that a system can absorb before it undergoes a fundamental shift to a different set of processes or structures. Helping to ensure an ecosystem's resiliency is predicated on maintaining the genetic diversity, biologic diversity, and heterogeneity of landscape mosaics within the system. To keep this diversity, ecosystem processes (*i.e.*, water cycle, mineral cycle, energy flow, and community dynamics) need to remain as intact as possible.

Invasive species have the ability to thrive and spread aggressively outside their natural range, homogenizing landscapes by outcompeting native species for resources. Unfortunately, scientists posit that climate change will exacerbate the invasives problem in the United States and worldwide. The development and implementation of Invasive Species Prevention Zones (ISPZs) may well be one of the best strategies to help ensure the resiliency of our terrestrial systems – a strategy that is even more important given the anticipated effects of climate change.

An Invasive Species Prevention Zone is a formal LIISMA designation for a natural area that is dominated by native species and natural communities. By delineating Invasive Species Prevention Zones, land managers can maximize limited staff, equipment and funding

resources by focusing on sites that are relatively free of invasive species, have high ecological value, and thus are most likely to yield results. For each site invasive species are mapped, management efforts are prioritized, a site-specific, integrated invasive species management plan is written, and then the area is formally designated as an ISPZ. Prevention, 'early detection' of new invaders and a 'rapid response' to their discovery are the main focuses of the management plan and subsequent eradication efforts.

As the pressure from invasives on Long Island grows, the need for ISPZs will increase. ISPZs serve as a "safe campus" for the abundant genetic and biological diversity found in our native ecosystems. When the timing is right, these sites will have the potential to colonize outward. The more successful we are in protecting an area's diversity, the more chance there is of a more complex system existing and radiating outward.

The 2006 NY Natural Heritage Program report entitled "Identifying Potential Natural Heritage Areas", summarizes an assessment of the statewide natural heritage database of more than 11,000 records and identified a subset of state lands throughout New York that are known to support truly exceptional biodiversity concentrations (aka "biodiversity hotspots"). This statewide perspective helps highlight the importance of managing select landscapes throughout New York. The following were identified as Long Island's "biodiversity hotspots": Hither Hills State Park, Connetquot River State Park, David A Sarnoff Pine Barrens Preserve, Gilgo State Park, Jones Beach State Park, Long Island Pine Barrens Preserve, Napeague State Park, North Haven State Tidal Wetlands, Otis Pike Wildlife Management Area, and Quogue Wildlife Management Area.

It may make most sense to add a new criterion to the LIISMA ISPZ designation. LIISMA could modify the criteria to allow for biodiversity hotspots, so that even if the area does not add up to the minimum number of acres (500), it could be considered for ISPZ status because of its other extraordinary qualities. ISPZs continue to be a tool for managing and directing attention to ecologically important areas, and hopefully allowing for adaptation of our natural communities.

It was generally agreed that LIISMA would also like for the Natural Heritage Program to review all public lands for biodiversity hotspots (they currently only examined state owned lands). This could allow for an accurate survey of the ecologically important areas.

Although resistance to establishing ISPZs is minimal, one concern of agencies is whether special designations (ISPZ or biological hotspots) could restrict what landowners can do on the land (i.e. build bathrooms or a visitor center).

The DEC will have a climate change report due by the end of the year. This report could help inform future LIISMA discussions in regards to climate change.

5. Other Updates

Scientific Review Committee – Marilyn Jordan – All species should be finished by next year. To see the results and forms visit nyis.info or liinvasives.org. There are about 90 species forms online as of now. An email of the results of the SRC results and the Do-Not-Sell list with phase out dates will go out to the LIISMA list serve.

Do-Not-Sell List Enforcement – Kathy Schwager – Purple loosestrife although outlawed in Nassau and Suffolk Counties since January 2009 is still widely sold. The other banned species have not been found in local nurseries. It appears that enforcement will primarily be complaint driven in Suffolk County. There is still a need for education of both nurseries and landscapers.

LIISMA funding – The outlook is not promising for LIISMA to receive state funding in the near future.

Article 24 general permit for EDRR in freshwater wetlands – The permit is still moving forward within the TNC organization. LIISMA will be kept informed of progress.

The next meeting will be December 3, 2009 10am - 12:30pm at the Pine Barrens Commission Office, Great River, NY

Attendees:

Kathy Schwager – The Nature Conservancy

Alex Entrup – The Nature Conservancy

Marilyn Jordan – The Nature Conservancy

Joe Parent – NYS Dept. of Ag. & Markets

Robert P. Leonti - NYS Dept. of Ag. & Markets

Stephen W. Clark – US Dept of Ag. Plant health Plant protections and Quarantine

Lara Urvat – Nelson Pope & Voorhis

Andrew Gaites – Town of East Hampton

Lisa D’Andrea – Town of East Hampton

Polly Weigand – SC Soil and Water Conservation District

Andy Senesac – Cornell Cooperative Extension

Gary Lawton – NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Laura Bavaro – The Nature Conservancy

Ann Carter – Central Pine Barrens Commission

Vincent Cocca – NYS Dept. of Transportation Region 10

Alexis Alvey – Cornell Cooperative Extension

Marlene Bombara – USDA Animal and Plant Health and Inspection Service