

MILE-A-MINUTE CONTROL PROJECT ANNOUNCES MAJOR CHANGES FOR 2014

Since 2007, our volunteers have worked with a crew of college students checking properties and pulling Mile-a-Minute Vine (MAM). We checked over 300 properties and destroyed the MAM plants on those where we found MAM. We worked mostly on three large populations in New Milford, Bridgewater and Roxbury, and also on a few small populations elsewhere.

Each year we removed almost all of the MAM plants in these populations before the plants could produce seeds. We slowed, but were unable to stop, the spread of MAM. In 2013 we found that MAM has spread from the known area near New Milford High School to the east side of the Still River into rough shrubby areas impossible to access. We also found that MAM had spread to an equally inaccessible area downstream from the population in the Dorwin Hill area of New Milford/ Bridgewater.

We will not have a crew of college student interns to battle MAM on local properties this year. The primary funding was through grants specifically to hire student interns to help stop the spread of MAM. Grant money is not easy to find. Since we now know that we can't achieve that goal, we are no longer applying for grants. Instead, our volunteers will continue educational outreach and will work with individual property owners to help them control MAM.

Our small group of volunteers will continue field work on some critical properties, including New Milford High School and a parcel belonging to Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust. Donations from private individuals should be adequate to cover the expenses associated with our education programs and volunteer crew.

WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU

We will continue to work with property owners. We are always available to provide advice. We can also help you check your property and teach you how to recognize, remove and destroy MAM before it goes to seed.

We can help you pull MAM. For safety reasons, we do not do field work alone. However, if you, or persons you designate, are willing to work with us, we will help pull the plants. We anticipate, but cannot guarantee, that we will be able to help everybody who requests help.

*Please contact me to make an appointment for help. **Timing is critical. To avoid seed production, plan a first check of the season between June 1 and June 20.** My volunteers and I will try to be available at hours that are convenient for you. We can work weekdays, evenings, and weekends – let us know what works best for you.*

The attached property-specific information will give you a very good idea of where the MAM has been found on your property, what actions are recommended to keep it in control, and how much time it will take for you to keep it from spreading. With a relatively small amount of carefully-timed work, you can prevent MAM from becoming a major pest on your property.

Kathleen Nelson

*Chair, Invasive Species Advisory Committee, Mad Gardeners, Inc.
Field Supervisor, Mad Gardeners' Mile-a-Minute Control Project
knelson151@sbcglobal.net (the best way to contact me)
860-355-1547 (8AM to 9 PM)*

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