**Helping Gardeners Create a Beautiful Landscape Free of Invasive Plants**

by Melinda Myers

We are finding more and more people are interested in learning about invasive plants and you have an important role in sharing the information they need. This year with the support of the UW-Madison Extension Aquatic Invasive Outreach and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, we were able to connect with over 1,100 people in the two webinars they sponsored. To me, this indicates a significant interest in making a difference as it relates to managing invasive plants in our environment. For those of you who were able to attend, we appreciate you taking the time and your efforts to share your knowledge and passion on this subject.

If you missed the webinars, the recordings are still available to watch. Here is the link to the [Helping Gardeners Create a Landscape Free of Invasive Plants webinar](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/component-page?action=viewdetailpage&sharelevel=meeting&useWhichPasswd=meeting&clusterId=us02&componentName=need-password&meetingId=M5-ftAtTCcB-gaRyL2l0tu6FF9CfYOCFelNFsroPKBBTRkle4kUIikOqw2Sx4Gue.yTn-UdnOS6IqBDTS&originRequestUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fus02web.zoom.us%2Frec%2Fshare%2F4wHsRoeS40H_hmDUyq55SDMtriwI3MLNHqxffPBuEHA_QpCFpWiP47sAc3Q1yiNX.Q12PK8tpbXwpMfnB) (**enter Passcode:** **C4UKDz!y**) and [download the handout](https://www.melindamyers.com/application/files/6217/0673/1574/HELPING_GARDENERS_CREATE_A_LANDSCAPE_FREE_OF_INVASIVE_PLANTS.pdf). Please share this information with other influencers in your group and other organizations that may be interested in learning more.

The second webinar recording Create a Beautiful Landscape Free of Invasive Plants is housed on the [Milwaukee Public Library YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1nuf2li5p0) and you can [download the handout](https://www.melindamyers.com/application/files/7117/0923/9380/CREATE_A_BEAUTIFUL_LANDSCAPE_FREE_OF_INVASIVE_PLANTS.pdf). This is geared toward the general public, so please feel free to share this with anyone who wants to learn more on this subject.

You can also find links to both webinars and handouts on [www.MelindaMyers.com](http://www.Melinda) by going to the [On Demand Webinars page](https://www.melindamyers.com/about-melinda/on-demand-webinars).

This increase in interest in invasive species provides us with an opportunity to reach new gardeners and those who are unfamiliar with this problem. Many of you, like me, have been talking about invasive species for years but as you know, like any subject, it may be new to people reaching out to you for gardening and environmental information.

A recent survey showed many new and young gardeners are shopping for plants online. Although regulations for the sale, purchase, and possession of invasive species are in place, some online sellers are not aware, up-to-date, or concerned with following existing state and federal regulations. Just because the plant can be purchased does not mean it is allowed in Wisconsin. We have an opportunity to help gardeners make informed purchases to avoid creating problems in their landscapes and our natural spaces and waterways here in Wisconsin. Encourage them to visit the [Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources website](https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Invasives/what.html) before placing their online plant order.

Take advantage of June, Wisconsin Invasive Species Awareness Month, to help spread the word. Check out the many resources listed on page 14 of my [handout](https://www.melindamyers.com/application/files/7117/0923/9380/CREATE_A_BEAUTIFUL_LANDSCAPE_FREE_OF_INVASIVE_PLANTS.pdf), and place an order now for any [WI DNR resources](https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Invasives/publications) you would like to share as you help make residents aware of invasive plants.

When you meet with gardeners and discover any invasive plants in their landscape, start by making a connection. Keep in mind that many gardeners are not aware the plant is a problem. Let them know why management is important and how to properly dispose of the invasive plant.

Do the same when enjoying the outdoors. Watch for and report any invasive plant infestations you spot in public green spaces and natural areas to the Wisconsin DNR by emailing invasive.species@wisconsin.gov. Visit <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Invasives/report.html> where you’ll find tips for documenting and reporting as well as links to other resources.

Thanks for all you do and together we can make a difference!