**Week 21- Terrestrial Invasive Species**

**Conservation Corner**

***Conservation Corner is a regular article produced by the Forest County Land Conservation and Land Information Department. For more information contact Al Murray, County Conservationist-Land Information/GIS Director at 715-478-1387 or by e-mail at*** ***lcc@co.forest.wi.us******.***

Terrestrial invasive species come in many forms including plants, animals, insects, fungi and diseases. They affect the health of our forests, prairies, parks, urban landscapes and more. When these landscapes are unhealthy, all the benefits they provide to us are at risk.

The introduction of non-native or invasive species is having dramatic effects on our native ecosystems. Invasive species rapidly reproduce, mature quickly and out-compete native plants which impact our native plant communities, native forests, wildlife habitat, and recreational areas.

Invasive plants such as garlic mustard and glossy buckthorn are invading our forest. Invasive species such as Purple loosestrife, narrow leaf cattail, and Phragmites are invading our wetlands. Invasive species such as Wild Parsnip provide threats to our health.

Invasive species also have a negative effect to our local economies, with particular impacts to the timber industry. Historically, Dutch elm disease had huge negative impacts to timber and timber utilizing industries. Elm was once a major species utilized in furniture, now it is nearly non-existent. Emerald ash borer, an invasive species, is likely to have a similar effect to all ash trees in the near future. The Asian long-horned beetle, feeds on sugar maple and may have future effects on all of our hardwood forest.

In the last few weeks the Land Conservation Department has provided reports to the Midwest Invasive Species Information Network (MISIN) including location of sites with Black Locust, Giant Knotweed, Glossy Buckthorn, and Wild Parsnip.

The Land Conservation Department is a member of the Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coalition (WRISC). WRISC is a cooperative with goals of cooperating across counties and across the Michigan state line, sharing resources, educating the public and taking action in addressing invasive species populations.

The good news is, each one of us can make a difference. Learn what to look for, and you can help slow the spread of invasive species! For more information on WRISC please visit their website at [www.wrisc.org](http://www.wrisc.org) or phone at 906-774-8841. If you think you know of an invasive species location please give WRISC or our office a call.