

Stewardship Network Notes

13 Nov 07

Bruegger's Bagels

The Stewardship Network meets the second Tuesday of the month at Bruegger's Bagels on North University, UM--Ann Arbor Campus, from 7:30 to 8:30 AM. The same topic is repeated on the third Thursday of the month at The Nonprofit Enterprise at Work (NEW) Center, 1100 N. Main, Ann Arbor, from 12:00 to 1:00 PM.

Topic: winter restoration work

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Advantages to winter removal of woodies and ground covers; to site surveys, to maintenance tasks

- invasives easier to spot when leaves are down
- frozen ground protects topsoil when dragging brush
- standing (keeper) trees have less vulnerable bark
- brush is easier to haul without leaves
- natives are dormant, so not killed by drifting herbicide
- perfect time to herbicide perennial evergreen ground covers like pachysandra, periwinkle, and English ivy
- perfect time to treat garlic mustard florets, which remain green very late fall and early spring
- workers not annoyed by heat, sweat, mosquitos, poison ivy, hidden brambles
- frozen wetlands and bogs are less vulnerable
- site surveys are easier without leaves
- tree removal is less obvious to the casual passer-by
- girdling or drill-fill results are not obvious until spring lack of growth
- less foot traffic means best time to remove trees growing dangerously close to houses or paths

Tools

brush blade, wand brush cutter, chain saw, pole saw, jewelers' file (this is available in hardware stores), loppers

Problems

- water-based herbicide is less effective than oil-based herbicide below 20 degrees F; garlon can be oil (ester)-based
- when working with volunteers not licensed to use herbicide, the volunteers cut and haul brush, and the steward/home owner can make a later pass if necessary, recutting (to satisfy the fresh stump requirement) and herbiciding
- creeping charlie disappears about the same time as the natives, making removal more problematic. Anybody know a solution to this one other than waiting until it has suppressed everything else and then herbicing it, or pulling it for years?

What to do with downed woodies

(depending upon your site, goals, and the quality of the wood)

- leave it where it falls to become part of the natural process
- make brush piles for small animal wintering
- cut large pieces for your (friend's) woodstove
- cut and bind to City requirements for pick up and conversion to mulch
- contact re-use center about salvage lumber.
- The Conservation district may have further advice on this topic.