

Help Reduce the Threat of Potential Plant Invaders

By BRADLEY SIMPSON and SARA TANGREN

The National Capital Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (NatCap PRISM) was formed to coordinate the cross-boundary fight against invasive species in D.C. and all surrounding counties. NatCap PRISM is a multi-jurisdictional partnership that includes governmental and non-governmental organizations from the District, Maryland (Montgomery and Prince George's County), and Virginia (Arlington and Fairfax County). Part of NatCap PRISM's mission is to monitor the presence of species that could qualify as 'early detection and rapid response' species, known in the invasive world as EDRR species. These species are new to the region and have the potential to invade our natural areas. It is during this stage that it is most efficient to remove invasives—see the "Invasion Curve" below.

NatCap PRISM collects information on EDRR species through the community science apps iNaturalist and EDDMapS. Anyone can use the apps to record sightings of unknown, suspected, or invasive species. If you are using iNaturalist, observations are automatically recorded to various projects, such as NatCap PRISM's, if they meet the project's criteria for taxa and location. Find out more about the NatCap PRISM project by visiting the project page on iNaturalist (inaturalist.org/projects/invasion-detectives-national-capital-region). Here, you can also find a list of taxa that are being monitored by the NatCap PRISM network. So, by simply making observations of suspected invasives with iNaturalist, you can play an important role in invasive control.

You can also become a volunteer Invader Detective. Invader Detectives have a more active role in the monitoring of EDRR invasive species by participating in volunteer events to locate specific target species. If you are outside of the above counties

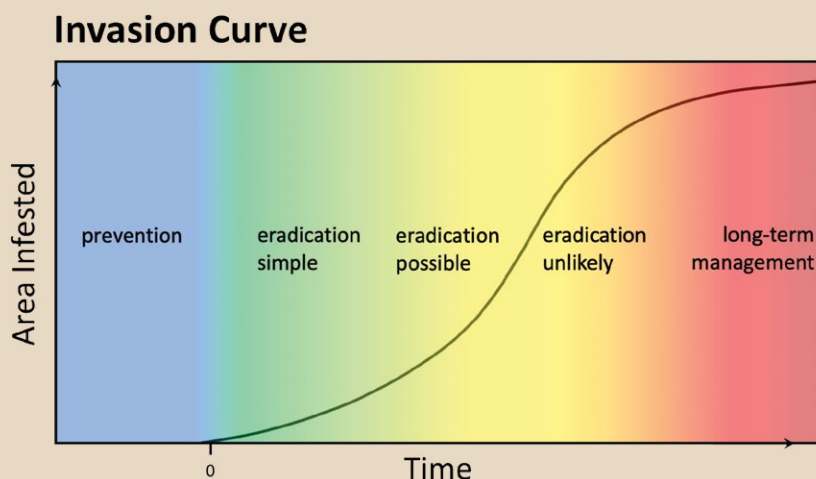
Holly olive (*Osmanthus heterophyllus*) may appear similar to our native American holly (*Ilex opaca*) but can be distinguished by its opposite leaf arrangement. This new non-native species is beginning to spread rapidly in the DC region. Photo by Bradley Simpson.



Christmas berry (*Photinia villosa*) boasting a striking red fall color. This invasive species looks very similar to our native red chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*) and is beginning to spread quickly along Rock Creek in Montgomery County and DC. Photo by Bradley Simpson.

you can still report potential invasive species through EDDMaps. For more information on how you can help stop the spread of these invasive species please contact Sara Tangren at stangren@mwcog.org.

For more information on plant species already designated as invasive in Maryland and vicinity, see the Mid-Atlantic Invaders Tool at: invasive.org/midatlantic.



Prevention is always the most cost-effective and ecologically effective way to fight invasive species (the blue zone). However, once species are introduced to an area, eradication is only simple during a 'lag period' when an invasive species' population size remains small (the green zone). Once the population begins to rise, eradication becomes increasingly difficult and more expensive (yellow to red zone). The Invader Detectives program finds and manages potentially invasive species while they are still in the 'green zone'. Graphic by Sara Tangren