



# FRIENDS *of* LONG BRANCH STREAM VALLEY

Volume 2, Issue 2

December 2015

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## *Letter from the President...*

Hello everyone. It's again with great enthusiasm that I get to write a letter to our volunteers and supporters. There is so much going on community-wise and trail related, that I'm not going to be able to elaborate on everything! Many of the topics will be discussed in articles within this edition of the newsletter and those that are not, will surely be discussed in future newsletters and meetings. To name a few of the more prominent topics:



Braddock Road Widening

Potential Paving of the Long Branch Trail (SAVE THE DATE: **Open Forum on January 12**, Kings Park Community Room)

Deer Management Program

Trail Improvement

Trail Clean Up

Long Branch Falls Restoration

Recently, at the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA), the idea of paving the Long Branch Trail was put forth as a possible project for the future. The conversation about this potential project is truly in the beginning stages. FLBSV's mission is to be the eyes and ears of the communities it

supports. We are interested in feedback from our communities on the potential paving of the trail. We are not here to take a position one way or the other, but want to ensure the community's thoughts and feedback are heard and considered. There will be an open forum meeting on January 12, 7:30 pm-8:30 pm, at the Kings Park Community Room (above Zinga), to discuss this potential project.

Representation from the FCPA will be there to go over the details under consideration, pros and cons. If you are interested in attending and/or have questions, please feel free to email me directly or call. [chrisbauernshub@gmail.com](mailto:chrisbauernshub@gmail.com), 703-597-1701.

As always if there are any topics that you would like to see discussed or brought up in future meetings, communications or newsletters, please feel free to reach out.

Thanks again for your support! Happy Trails.

Chris Bauernshub

President, Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley

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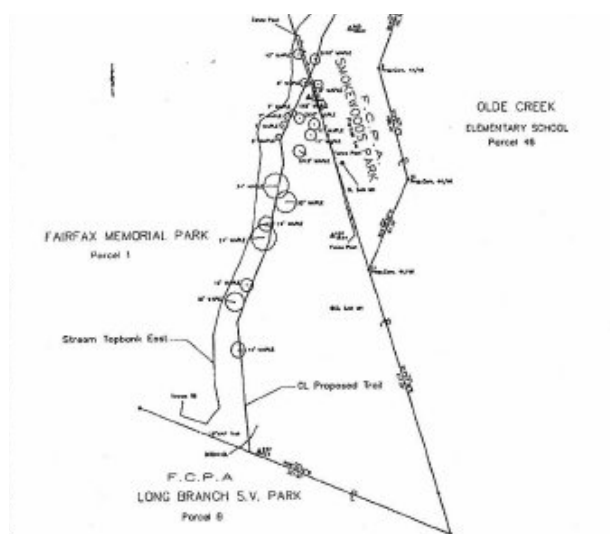
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## Fairfax Memorial Trail Easement Comes To Light

The vision of a Long Branch Stream Valley trail that stretches from Woodson High School to Wakefield Chapel Road is one step closer to reality with the realization that Fairfax Memorial Gardens executed a trail easement with the Park Authority in November 2006 allowing a trail to be constructed on Fairfax Memorial property just south of Smokewood Park and adjacent to Olde Creek Elementary School to the north, to be united with stream valley property just north of the Somerset South community to the south.

Additional information is provided in Figure 1.

*Tony Vellucci*



*Figure 1: Map of trail easement along Fairfax Memorial Gardens.*

## FLBSV Community Survey

We want to know what YOU think about several of the potential projects in our community: paving the stream trail, a trail in Long Branch Falls Park, fitness equipment in Rutherford Park, widening Braddock Road, and a Kings Park Transit Center. Help us represent your opinions by answering a few questions. Please click on the link below and complete the survey.

[Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley Community Survey](#)

*Jim Hawkins*

## Braddock Road Widening

The project to widen Braddock Road is marching along. Along with potential impacts on the communities that surround Braddock Road and Long Branch stream, the widening will add many acres of “hard surface” run off into our stream, but there may be ways to mitigate the effects. So far these mitigation efforts have not been publicly presented; however, it is expected they will be in the future.



*Photo by Alan Rulis of a Female Pileated Woodpecker in Long Branch Stream Valley Park*

FLBSV has a representative on the Braddock Road Task Force – a group of representatives from local organizations such as HOAs and Civic Associations. We will keep you posted as situations develop. You are always welcome to visit information concerning the this project on our website at: <http://longbranchstream.weebly.com/>

Any comments, concerns or suggestions you may have may be directed to the FLBSV representative, Jim Hawkins, at [friendslbsv@gmail.com](mailto:friendslbsv@gmail.com)

*Jim Hawkins*

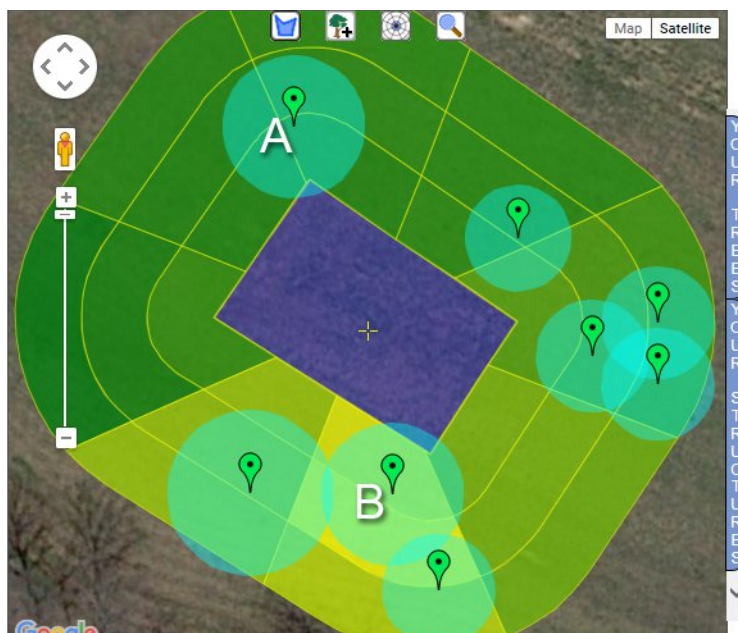
## What a Tree Is Worth

Within a home, folks cut utility bills in many ways, such as saving water with low-flow faucet aerators or reducing power consumption by insulating the attic or replacing old windows with energy-efficient ones. However, many people overlook an outdoor money-saving resource: trees! Over the years, trees can reward landowners with hundreds to thousands of dollars worth of perks if planted in the right spots. Tree benefits include cooling shade during summer, buffering winds in winter, stabilizing soil, improving air quality, and absorbing carbon dioxide. You can easily calculate the dollars and cents behind a tree's value through i-Tree. After following several simple steps, the output shows how much money any given tree will save or cost you over a specified time.

Begin by measuring the diameters (or circumferences) of all trees on the property. For the purposes here, a “tree” is a woody plant with at least a one inch diameter at its base and potentially grows to at least 20 feet; flowering dogwoods and redbuds are some of the smallest species. For birches and other multi-trunked trees, take all of the trunks' diameters, square them, sum the squares, calculate the square root of that sum, and use that number for that specimen's diameter. While measuring the diameters, jot down the type of tree and its overall health. If you cannot determine the species, then note generic features, like if it is an evergreen “pine” or “Tree, Unknown” for a deciduous specimen.

Next, go to the i-Tree website, <http://www.itreetools.org/design.php>. Enter the property's address and click “Go!” Once a Google Maps image of the house and yard appears, follow the website's instructions to delineate the building's area. Now, click on Step 2 to add trees. Notice how many of the property's trees are visible (at least somewhat) on this map. Before inserting trees, consider taking a screen capture of the current image because once a tree is added, a green and yellow grid appears across the ground that prevents seeing other trees' locations. Referring to the trees seen in the earlier screen capture might come in handy as each tree's relative location gets entered. In describing the tree, include the species' common name, diameter or circumference, overall health, and sunlight exposure.

After inputting all tree data, clicking the “Model Crown Growth” button shows the trees' projected growth over the next 50 years. To compute the estimated cost savings over the years, click on Step 3's “Estimate Benefits” bar, enter the number of years to cover (2-99), and click the “Calculate >>” button. A new window appears containing data tabs including the current year's benefits and the money saved over the previously selected timespan. The data can be broken down into the direct impact each individual tree has on the property and itemize the stormwater retained, electricity and heating fuel saved, air pollutants filtered, and carbon dioxide sequestered. Some items, such as stormwater benefits, remain the same regardless of where the tree is on the property. However, a tree's species and placement relative to the house plays a huge impact on energy savings. For example, Figure 1 shows a screen capture of a hypothetical property. Both trees A and B are identical white pines. However, A saves \$65 for the current year and B comes in at a -\$26 loss even though they are the same distance from the house. This difference is because pine A is



**Figure 1.** This image from i-Tree displays the trees' expected crown growth. To respect privacy, the depicted building and trees are fictional. Trees A and B are both white pines, though A offers more cost savings than the one south of the hypothetical structure. Even with the handful of oaks, hickories, and other trees here, the total money saved this year is \$310 and projected to be \$652 in 20 years, accruing nearly \$10,000 of tax-free savings during this time.



**What a Tree Is Worth, (continued from page 3)**

north of the house and hinders winter winds; pine B affords some summer shade at a savings but that shade costs more by blocking warm sunlight during the winter. An oak or other deciduous tree is a better choice in site B. You might like to use i-Tree when planning future landscaping renovations.

Although i-Tree is a fantastic tool to virtually assess a property's tree value, it does not consider every aspect. For example, no warnings flash if a closely situated sycamore's root system might damage the house's foundation or if a diseased and leaning tree should be removed. Likewise, no red flags pop up if a willow could possibly clog a nearby sewer line with intrusive roots. If the user plans to chop down trees, i-Tree's stormwater feature displays a decreased monetary savings but will not alert you if removing too many water-absorbing roots might cause erosion or basement flooding during future rains. The longevity of certain short-lived tree species can be inaccurately extended beyond its actual life expectancy. i-Tree neither considers a tree's aesthetic value nor services to wildlife—a big bonus from native trees.

Final notes: the better the tree's health, the greater paybacks it will provide. Every few years, have mature trees thinned professionally by a licensed and insured arborist and not the cheapest guy who comes knocking. Thinning branches help trees survive microbursts, derechos, ice storms, and other extreme weather events. To give woodpeckers and other wildlife food and homes, leave dead trees or a tall stump *provided* they do not pose a safety risk and are away from any structures.

Greg Sykes ([greg@grsykes.com](mailto:greg@grsykes.com))

For more information got to: [What a Tree Is Worth \(2015-12\)](#)

## Deer Harvest Program Status Report

Deer harvest totals from September 12, 2015 through November 23, 2015 county wide are 806 with 8 of those from the Long Branch Stream Valley.

Dr. Katherine Edwards, Wildlife Management Specialist with the Fairfax County Police Department notes that white-tailed deer are on the move as breeding season is here. Drivers may expect to see increased numbers of the deer on and near roadways. Fairfax County crash data indicates that there have been almost 400 reportable deer-vehicle collisions in the past five years. Deer movements and behaviors are unpredictable and deer-vehicle collisions are a serious public safety concern.

According to a September 2015 State Farm report, Virginia has the 10th highest rate in the nation for deer-vehicle collisions. The odds that a Virginia driver will have an insurance claim in 2015 as the result of a deer-vehicle collision is 1 out of 97.

In 2014, contractors picked up over 1,100 deer carcasses on county roadways. This year, almost 900 have been picked up, so far. Approximately one-half or more of all deer-vehicle collisions generally occur during the months of October, November, and December. Deer are especially active pre-dawn to mid-morning and dusk to early evening. These periods of activity correspond with the time when many Fairfax County residents are commuting to and from work or school. Fairfax County Police urge motorists to drive cautiously during this time and be on the lookout for deer crossing roadways. If a deer is injured or killed, immediately report the collision to the Fairfax County Police Department (non-emergency) at 703-691-2131.



## Park Authority Exploring Paving of Long Branch Stream Valley Trail

Park Authority staff is now identifying potential projects for the 2016 bond referendum that will be held in November 2016, and one of the projects for consideration is the paving of the Long Branch Stream Valley Trail (Woodland Way to Canterbury Woods Park).

There are pro's and con's to such an effort. On the plus side, a paved trail requires less maintenance in the long term as there will be no need to continuously bring gravel/stonedust to rehabilitate failed trail sections. Paved trails have a 15 year life expectancy. Further, the trail will be regraded to facilitate stormwater run-off eliminating periodic flooding, and the smoother surface will eliminate the sharp rocks that constitute a safety hazard to hikers and bikers. Lastly, the paving provides for greater use by a wider range of park patrons from mom's walking with strollers to the elderly who will have better stability underfoot.

On the negative side, the rustic/nature experience may be impacted, and the smoother surface provides an opportunity for greater speeds by bikers who are not necessarily out for a leisurely stroll.

Community involvement is absolutely essential, and so, a community meeting sponsored by the Friends group is tentatively planned for mid-January. Park Authority reps will be on hand to present why they selected LBSV as a potential paving project, and to answer any questions. Meeting information will be communicated as soon as available.

Portions of the Lake Accotink Park trail just south of Braddock Road have recently been paved, and the Park Authority is looking at paving about 5200 linear feet of trail in Wakefield Park. A public meeting for that initiative was held in mid-October.

*Tony Vellucci*

## Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley Welcome Somerset South

On Friday October 30<sup>th</sup> 2015, FCPA representatives Liz Cronauer (Planning & Development Division, Trails Development Manager) and Ed Richardson (Area 4 Maintenance Manager) attended a meeting sponsored by Braddock District Supervisor Cook with Somerset South Homeowner Association (SSHOA) leaders to brief the HOA board on a potential trail project linking Somerset South to Smokewood Park and Olde Creek Elementary School. A second meeting is being held in early December to walk the park, discuss easements and potential next steps.

Ms. Cronauer noted that since the trail would be new construction and is in a flood plain, she would prefer to design any new trail options as an asphalt trail. With Park Authority staff currently looking at identifying potential projects for the 2016 bond referendum, she would recommend this project also be considered, along with the paving of the Long Branch Stream Valley Trail.

During the meeting, the Braddock District Representative to the Park Authority Board made the Somerset South representatives aware of the Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley. SSHOA is interested in getting involved in the Friends group.

FLBSV, and its sister Friends groups, the Friends of Accotink Creek (FACC), and the Friends of Lake Accotink Park (FLAP) are having a positive impact on the Accotink Watershed. From clean up days to the freshwater Mussel Rescue Program, to the Raiders of the Lost Trash, these Friends groups are helping to improve the quality of life for Braddock District residents.

*Tony Vellucci*

## Friends of Accotink Creek Receive Elly Doyle Park Service Award

Earlier this year, the Fairfax County Park Authority Board named the Friends of Accotink Creek (FACC) as one of the three 2015 recipients of the Elly Doyle Park Service Award. The award is the agency's top honor for volunteer service, and recognizes individuals and organizations that contribute outstanding volunteer service to the Park Authority.

On Friday November 20<sup>th</sup> 2015, the Friends of Accotink Creek received their award at the Annual Elly Doyle Park Service Award and Outstanding Volunteer Reception. FACC was honored for their work in restoring, promoting and protecting the Accotink Creek watershed to enhance the enjoyment of biking, fishing, jogging, walking and bird watching along a major portion of the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail. FACC is active in watershed clean-ups, works to arrest erosion, rescues stranded mussels, and helps fight invasive plants.

Other recipients included the Friends of Huntley Meadows (FOHMP) who are celebrating their 30th year of providing support to Huntley Meadows Park; and Susan L. Voss, a Green Spring Master Gardener, who was cited for her leadership role as board president for the Friends of Green Spring (FROGS).

*Tony Vellucci*

### Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley Positions

*If you see an open position that you would be interested in, please email Chris at [chrisbauernshub@gmail.com](mailto:chrisbauernshub@gmail.com)*

#### Officers:

President	Chris Bauernshub
Vice President	Scott Thaxton
Secretary	Lisa Young

#### Committees:

Invasive Management	(interim) Bryan Campbell
Trail Management	Scott Thaxton
Water Quality Management	Joe Dicerbo
Educational Awareness	Lisa Young & Bryan Campbell
Community Outreach	Allison Hagner
Braddock District Representative to the	
Park Authority Board of Directors	Tony Vellucci
Members-at-Large	Jim Hawkins, Roger Hartman and Dave Rabadan

#### Community Leads:

Olde Forge/Surrey Square - Gary and Mimi Kraus  
 Canterbury Woods  
 Rutherford  
 Red Fox Forest - Lisa Young  
 Long Branch - David Rabadan  
 Stone Haven - Chris Bauernshub  
 Bradfield  
 Little Run  
 Hidden Creek  
 Somerset South - Doug Pickford





## Park Authority Holiday Activities

Check out all of the holiday-themed park activities to enrich the season in the [Holiday issue of ResOURces](#). You can subscribe to the publication online by signing up for the FCPA's e-news at [FCPA E-news](#).

Mary Cortina



**Santa Visits Lake Accotink Park!**  
December 12, 2015  
12 to 3 PM

**Horse-Drawn Wagon Rides**

- \$12 per person - ages 2 and under free
- Ride is 15 minutes long
- Includes visit to Santa's Pavilion
- Choose from 6 departure times
- Must reserve seat in advance \*
- Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes/> \*

**Tractor-Drawn Wagon Rides**

- Rides 10 minutes long
- \$6 per person - ages 2 and under free
- Visit Santa for an additional fee

**Warm Up by our Lakeside Campfire!**

**Photos with Santa!**  
\$5 Per child  
(No charge for adults in same shot.)  
Remember to bring your cameras!

**Special Hour for Pet photos with Santa!**  
11AM to 12PM  
\$6 Per Animal

**Lake Accotink Park**  
7500 Accotink Park Road  
Springfield, Virginia 22150  
703-569-0285

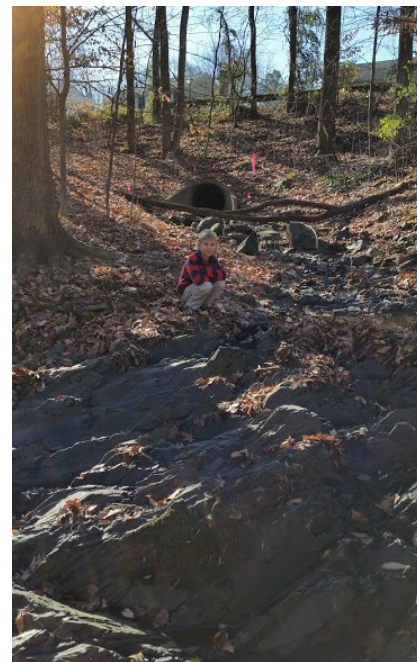
If ADA accommodations and/or alternative formats are needed, please call (703) 324-8563 at least 10 working days in advance Event. TTY (703) 803-3354.

## Notes from Long Branch Falls Park Stream Restoration Meeting:

On October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015, Fairfax County Public Works and Environmental Services (FCPWES) hosted a project day meeting to discuss the conceptual design for a stream restoration project in Long Branch Falls Park. Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley, along with other stakeholders for the project, were invited by the designated project team to attend and learn more about the project. We had the opportunity to voice community concerns regarding the project so they could be addressed in the design. Below are notes taken during the meeting.

The meeting discussed the purpose and need of the project, the existing conditions of the park, the objectives of the stream restoration project, proposed concept designs for consideration and the remaining project schedule. Provided below is a summarization of the discussion points during the meeting.

- The Purpose and need were explained.
  - Stream is severely entrenched in areas with stream bends threatening to undercut trees and cut away residents backyards.
- Existing conditions were described.
  - Deer have decimated the regeneration of the understory.
  - Portions of other onsite tributary streams were observed to be contributing factors to stream degradation.
  - Soils pits were taken to identify depth of bedrock.
  - A tree survey within the park documented 210 trees 10 inches in diameter or greater.
  - FLBSV requested that the information from environmental studies and surveys be provided for display on the Friends website.
- Discussion of objectives.
  - Two conceptual alignments were provided with not much difference in alignments. Differences were only in the proposed upstream half due to available space constraints.
  - The final alignment has yet to be determined. Location of bedrock may shift the alignment.
  - Access into the park to the project area will be from King David Blvd. It was determined to be the best option for project. Access Road alignment is still being determined to minimize tree loss.
  - Portions of the two tributary streams to the main stream are to be included with scope of restoration to facilitate increased stabilization of the main stream.
  - Around 40 trees are proposed to be removed for the project. Lengthy discussion was focused on saving mature, high-valued trees and taking out smaller, lesser-valued trees. Tree replanting is built into the project with probable deer exclusion areas. 8' tall deer exclusion fencing will likely be installed and maintained for 3 years.
  - There was no discussion of addressing inlet culvert under Sabra Lane.
- Remaining Project Schedule
  - December is when the next round of design plans will be complete. Should include more details such as which alignment and instream structures will be used. An onsite walk through of the project will be conducted. A community walk through of the project with the project manager can be set up to explain the proposed design if there is enough interest.
  - Final design is projected to be completed by February 2016.
  - Construction is dependent on funding availability, but is anticipated for 2017.
  - Monitoring for project will be conducted for 3-5 years post construction.



*Long Branch Falls Park  
December 2015  
Photo by Allison Hagner*

If you would like to know more about this project or stream restoration in general, feel free to contact FLBSV member Bryan Campbell at [friendslbsv@gmail.com](mailto:friendslbsv@gmail.com). *Bryan Campbell*

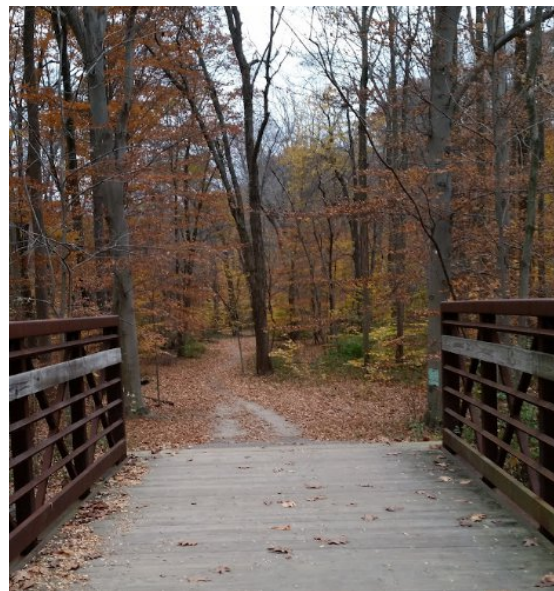


## GPS Trail Hunt – Adventure for All Ages

We have some hunting for you and yours to do along portions of the Long Branch Stream Trail. No animals will be harmed! Just a good old fashioned treasure hunt with natural treasures to be discovered. All you need is a gps unit or mobile device with a map program. Even if you find nothing, we promise you will have a little outdoor fun along the stream.

Our first GPS Trail Hunt is called the [Duck's Back Hunt](#). There are seven GPS coordinates, see below, and seven finds, one at each GPS coordinate.

38.81965,-77.26215 See the Bamboo!  
38.82068,-77.25985 Find a big three.  
38.82132,-77.25825 Can you see PVC1120?  
38.81845,-77.25755 Good place to throw a few rocks.  
38.81759,-77.25710 Anything in that hollow tree?  
38.81748,-77.25210 How many trees are connected here?  
38.81819,-77.24931 Find Duck's Back



Most phones and tablets with GPS will allow you to see coordinates if you use a map application. Most GPS navigator units, such as Garmins, will allow you to see GPS coordinates as well. Otherwise you will need a sextant, very accurate watch and a lot of paper!

You will see on the website we have some small rewards. This project is in beta mode, so your comments and suggestions are welcome. We may transform it into a bigger program later on, but right now it is very simplistic by design.

Sent your comments to [friendslbsv@gmail.com](mailto:friendslbsv@gmail.com) and please visit our website for more information.  
<http://longbranchstream.weebly.com/>

*Jim Hawkins*

**Our Newsletter** The Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley Newsletter is distributed to members and the civic associations at Olde Forge / Surrey Square, Rutherford, Hidden Creek, Little Run, Long Branch, Bradfield, Red Fox Forest, Canterbury Woods and Stonehaven. It comes out quarterly, in March, June, September and December. We would love your submissions - photos, comments and articles about the stream valley. Send them our way. Submissions received by February 15<sup>th</sup> 2015 will be included in the March edition. Please send them to the editor, Allison Hagner at [friendslbsv@gmail.com](mailto:friendslbsv@gmail.com). We look forward to hearing from you! You can keep up with our project on our website: <http://longbranchstream.weebly.com/>. Thank you to all of our contributors: Chris Bauernshub, Bryan Campbell, Mary Cortina, Allison Hagner, Jim Hawkins, Doug Pickford, Greg Sykes, Julie Tahan, and Tony Vellucci.

## Invasive Species Profile: Winged Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*)

**Native Range:** Japan and northeastern Asia

**U.S. Introduction:** ~1860

**Life Cycle:** woody perennial

**Means of Spreading:** seeds

**Commercially Available:** yes

**Control Method:** hand-pull seedlings and saplings; remove bushes with a Weed Wrench; kill large specimens by constantly cutting away new growth

**Good Alternative Species:** winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), northern highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), red chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*), Virginia sweetspire (*Itea virginica*)

### Comments:

Winged burning bush was brought to the United States in the mid-nineteenth century as an ornamental shrub, especially for the way its dense foliage turns magenta-red in the fall. Throughout the rest of the year, it looks like a non-descript deciduous shrub except for the two to four *alatus* (thin ridges made from cork that give the branches a “winged” appearance) frequently lining the branches.

This species goes by many common names, including winged euonymus, cork bush, or simply “burning bush.” “Compactus” is a popular cultivar.

Given its recognizable autumnal display, low price tag, extreme hardiness, and pest resistance, burning bush became an overused choice for residential, commercial, and roadside landscaping projects. Its resilience, coupled with its fecundity, landed this species onto the noxious weed list. New Hampshire and Massachusetts already ban burning bush’s sale. In Northern Virginia, Invasive Management Area (IMA) and Early Detection-Rapid Response (EDRR) volunteers see burning bush’s range expanding through the parks. Both birds and elemental forces, such as water flow, disperse the seeds. In fact, when folks on IMA and EDRR patrols encounter the saplings, they can often follow the seedling trail uphill to the mother bush or patch. With so many late autumn fruits sprouting near the parental shrub, dense burning bush thickets soon develop and continue widening. This heavy, weedy undergrowth, reaching over 10 feet tall, displaces native plants. Their shallow roots do little to significantly suppress erosion. Without any local animals chomping on the shrubs except for the few birds spreading seeds, burning bush is ecologically worthless.

The good news about burning bush is that it is easily controlled. The near-surface roots make most specimens trouble-free to pull either by hand or with hand tools. Those too large to excise will die after several consecutive rounds of harsh, completely defoliating trims. IMA volunteers already conducted successful workdays targeting burning bush thickets at Royal Lake Park; site leaders

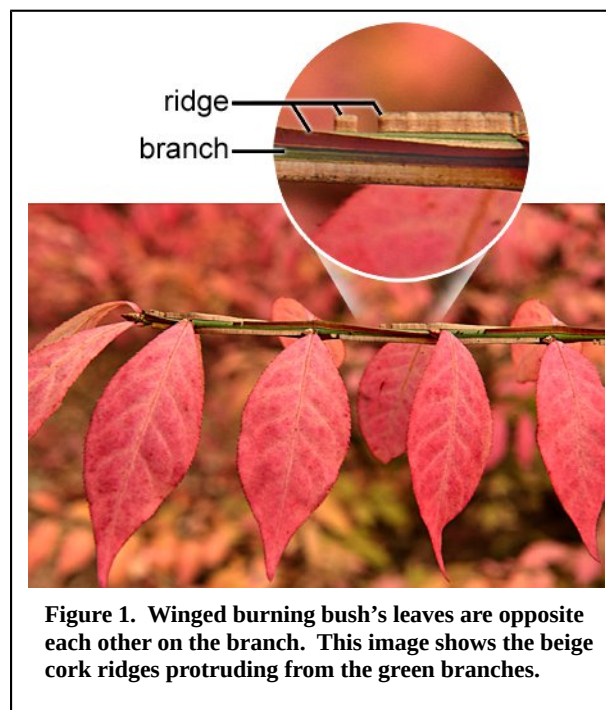


Figure 1. Winged burning bush’s leaves are opposite each other on the branch. This image shows the beige cork ridges protruding from the green branches.



Figure 2. A beneficial native alternative to burning bush, red chokeberry’s leaves blaze in the fall to match its brilliant berries. These fruits last into the winter until eaten by cedar waxwings, robins, and other birds.



continue monitoring these sites and pull seedlings germinating from the soil's seed bank.



**Figure 3.** Winged burning bush blooms with small, greenish yellow flowers (A) in the spring. The fruits ripen into scarlet berries (B) and are most conspicuous after the leaves drop. These fruits produce countless seedlings (C) that mature into dense thickets (D), easily spotted in autumn by the red foliage.

You can help stem burning bush's spread, too! Contact me about joining a future IMA workday and partake in this and other weeds' eradication. Even from home, you can help get burning bush under wraps by skipping it the next time you shop for shrubbery. If you already have burning bush, consider replacing it with a wonderful native alternative. Choose winterberry for jazzy red berries from September lasting into winter. For scarlet foliage, try chokeberries or blueberries. North America's only and sparsely-foliated *Euonymus* species, *E. americanus*, sports showy fruits leading to its common names, hearts-a-burstin' and strawberry bush. To achieve truly eye-catching fall coloration, Virginia sweetspire's calico foliage is a show-stopper!

Greg Sykes

Learn more at: [Invasive Species Profile: Winged Burning Bush \(\*Euonymus alatus\*\)](#), or [greg@grsykes.com](mailto:greg@grsykes.com)