

On March 16th your Committee will hear public comment on Raised Bill 5413, An Act Concerning Invasive Plants. If I were able to attend I would speak in favor of the bill. I serve on a Restoration Committee of Connecticut Audubon's National Historic Landmark facility, Birdcraft Museum and Sanctuary. we are struggling to return native plants to our sanctuary which has been overrun with invasive plants such as Japanese Barberry, Oriental Bittersweet, Privet, Multiflora Rose, Garlic Mustard and Alianthus. These plants choke out our native species and adversely impact the native fauna who depend on them. We applied for and were approved for a grant from the DEEP for assistance in our efforts to eradicate these invasives and to replace them with native bird friendly substitutes but our grant has not been funded. The least the Legislature should do is to continue to fund the position and Department that coordinates these efforts and educates the public.

In my own yard I have followed through on my committment to native plants by replacing foreign introductions such as the invasive Buddlea with native, bird friendly, deer resistant, attractive, low maintenance plants such as Bayberry, Inkberry, Winterberry, American High Bush Cranberry, High Bush Blueberry, Chokeberry, Viburnum Nudum, Black Gum (Nyssa sylvatica) and others. Public education and restrictions on nurseries and big box stores are also very important parts of this process to restore our State to environmental health.

Thank you

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