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# Guidelines for Adopt-a-Forest

Thank you for your interest in helping to care for the Blue Hills' forests! The Blue Hills wildlife depends on dedicated volunteers like you to regularly remove invasive species from their habitat. Without regular volunteer support, the ecosystem of the Blue Hills will be overrun with invasive plants, degrading the habitat for the endangered and other native species that depend on it.

You can help ensure the Blue Hills continue to provide a healthy habitat for wildlife and a rich ecosystem where native plants thrive. You can adopt your own part of the forest and help give something back to the Reservation.

## Adopter Responsibilities

We hope you consider that taking on the stewardship of a forest is a privilege. When you commit to becoming a forest adopter, we ask that you take the responsibilities of maintaining the land seriously. Please review the Adopter responsibilities below. **But remember, you certainly don't have to go it alone.** We highly recommend that you involve your family, friends, and other groups in your invasive removal process. Just remember that as the Adopter of the forest, you will be responsible for the quality of the work performed, as well as for the safety of your group.

We also encourage you to ask the Friends of the Blue Hills volunteer coordinator for help. Friends' staff is happy to help you recruit people to help you care for your portion of the forest, provide technical assistance or answer questions you may have about the plants or proper management.

Remember, too, that if a major problem arises, it is essential that you contact the Department of Conservation and Recreation at 617-727-6918 or 911. In a non-emergency situation, please contact the Friends of the Blue Hills Volunteer Coordinator: [julia@friendofthebluehills.org](mailto:julia@friendofthebluehills.org)

## Adopter Responsibilities

- Sign and submit the Adopter Agreement, which will be sent to you upon your acceptance into the program. (Minimum one-year commitment.)

- Attend an invasive species management class or review session. The Friends will provide periodic review sessions. Training courses are also offered through a number of organizations. We will provide information about upcoming training sessions. Let us know if you need a financial subsidy to attend an outside training. All Friends of the Blue Hills trainings will be free to Friends of the Blue Hills volunteers.
- Attend two invasive removal events in the Blue Hills. ([Check the Friends of the Blue Hills calendar for upcoming events](https://friendsofthebluehills.org/news-events/calendar): [friendsofthebluehills.org/news-events/calendar](https://friendsofthebluehills.org/news-events/calendar).)
- Walk your adopted trail with Friends of the Blue Hills' staff or Adopter Leader to review plant identification and removal practices.
- You will choose a portion of the forest along Burma Road in Fowl Meadow. We recommend that you start by focusing on removing and controlling one invasive in your portion of the forest.
- You will be responsible for the following:
  - Demonstrating the ability to identify the invasive(s) in the section of the forest that you have adopted.
  - Understanding and following DCR guidelines for removing invasive species from your section of the park.
  - Signing out equipment that you use from the shed (e.g. weed wrench, loppers and hand pruners)
  - Completing a written work report after each work visit to your portion of the forest. (<https://friendsofthebluehills.org/work-report>)
  - Perform these necessary tasks as many times as necessary during the peak growing season of the invasives that are most prominent in your section.
- As a Forest Adopter, you will:
  - Work closely with the volunteer coordinator and maintain open lines of communication.
  - Perform all work to protect the environment, natural resources, and the recreational experience of hikers.
  - Act in the spirit of partnership and as a Friends of the Blue Hills ambassador to the public.
  - Preferably, wear Friends of the Blue Hills swag to let people know you have permission to work in the park, that you're part of a larger effort, and that you're part of the Friends! We'll provide you with a hat and t-shirt.

#### 4 Forest Adopter Tips`

To keep your forest in the best possible condition we request that you do the following:

- Don't forget to ask for help! Contact Julia Milot with any questions:  
Julia@FriendsoftheBlueHills.org.
- Watch out for poison ivy!
- Check yourself for ticks after each time you go out.
- DCR does not allow us to use pickaxes to remove roots: please use one of the weed wrenches in the shed.
- Please return tools and equipment after use, particularly if we only have a limited number of the tools in the shed for others to use.

#### Priority plants to remove at Fowl Meadow

- Mile a minute
- Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)
- Common Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) or Glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*)
- Oriental Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)
- Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*)
- Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*)
- Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*)
- Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)

#### *Invasive plant Management – Fowl Meadow*

Invasive Plant	Management Technique	Time of year
Mile-a-minute vine ( <i>Persicaria perfoliata</i> )	Pull vines from root; if berries present, bag and remove	Spring/summer/fall
Garlic Mustard ( <i>Alliaria petiolata</i> )	Pulling except when located along the Pond's bank	Early spring

Common Buckthorn (Rhamnus cathartica) or Glossy buckthorn (Frangula alnus)	If plants are in a growth stage between fruit and flower, cut-stem. Manage small plants by pulling, mowing, weed wrench, etc.	Late summer/fall
Oriental Bittersweet (Celastrus orbiculatus)	<1" diameter stems: pull >1" stems: cut - stump	Summer/fall
Multiflora Rose (Rosa multiflora)	'If plants are in a growth stage between fruit and flower, cut-stem. Manage small plants by pulling, mowing, weed wrench, etc	Summer/fall
Japanese Barberry (Berberis thunbergii)	Manually remove with weed wrench if necessary: bag and remove if berries present.	Summer/fall
Burning Bush (Euonymus alatus)	Pull under 1 inch caliper with weed wrench.	
Japanese Knotweed (Fallopia japonica)	Cut - stump. If appropriate, manage small resprouts by mowing, cutting and bagging, or weed wrenching.	Between flower and fruit Summer before flowering Summer or Fall