

Toe Talk: Invasive plants in our area

By Felix Stith, coordinator
Toe Cane Watershed
Blue Ridge RC&D

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. There are few examples where this old saying from Benjamin Franklin rings truer than with invasive plants. An invasive plant as defined by the Natural Resource Conservation Service is: "A plant that is both non-native and able to establish on many sites, grow quickly, and spread to the point of disrupting plant communities or ecosystems." Most invasive plants here in western NC come from similar environments and ecosystems in Europe and Asia. Many invasive plants are brought here intentionally through nurseries and the landscaping industry. Some also arrive in products or as hitchhikers on vehicles, planes, and boats. Invasive species can dominate in ecosystems in which they are not naturally a part of because they do not have any checks and balances that limit population growth. These checks and balances include things like specialized predators, diseases, parasites, as well as environmental factors like certain climatic conditions. When a plant is moved to a new ecosystem and no longer has any natural checks or balances, its population can expand rapidly at the cost of its new ecosystem.

Our native plants have checks and balances that keep them in check here within their native ecosystem as well. Northern red oak is an example of this. Here the tree is perceived as a beautiful common member of our forest. A variety of pests and diseases that are also native to this ecosystem keep it in check here. But in Europe where northern red oak has been introduced, it is proving to be a very invasive plant. This is because across the Atlantic, it does not have the limiting factors (checks and balances) that it has here in its native ecosystem.

Here in western NC, we have our fair share of invasive plants with new ones arriving regularly. Invasive plants are bad news for a variety of reasons. They disrupt natural ecological processes present in our local native ecosystems. This has many drastic and far-reaching effects. Invasive plants can outcompete native plants for resources like sunlight, water, and nutrients in the soil. Some invasives are able to kill native plants - for instance, even the strongest oak tree can be killed in a couple of years by oriental bittersweet. This creates further sunlight openings and space where the invasive plant can dominate even more. Some invasive plants are hosts for invasive insects. This is seen with the tree of heaven acting as a host for the destructive spotted lanternfly.

Even if an invasive species does not completely take over an area, but is still present, ecosystem diversity still decreases drastically. A less diverse ecosystem is far more susceptible to disease, further invasive species colonization, drought, extreme wildland fire, and other disturbances. Less diverse ecosystems are not able to support nearly as much life. This includes everything alive in our native ecosystems from wildflowers, trees, insects, fish, birds, amphibians, mammals and much more. Invasive species have led to the extinction of native species.

Invasive plants have large economic impacts. The damages they cause result in outreaching effects and outcomes. It is incredibly costly to remove invasive plants. Invasive species can greatly affect property value. In many cases, if invasive plants reach high levels, it can cost more per acre of land to remove invasive plants than the acre is worth. Invasive plants negatively impact a variety of industries including farming, forestry, mining, tourism, public utility operations, among others.

Ranger Frank Blankenship states: "Several harmful invasive plants are spreading rapidly in our area. For suppression efforts to be effective, invasive plants need to be controlled on the landowner scale. Oriental bittersweet, Japanese knotweed, and tree of heaven are currently the most abundant in the area."

Certain invasive species can greatly impact water quality and property availability by increasing plant water use, erosion, and stormwater runoff. This in turn



Kudzu smothering plants and trees. Like bittersweet, kudzu can strangle and kill trees. This creates more sunlight openings and allows the plant to spread quicker. Photo from Invasive Species Initiative



Oriental bittersweet. Photo from USDA National Invasive Species Center. This plant will choke out even the toughest of native plants and trees. It has bright red berries that ripen in the fall. Birds will eat these berries and disperse the seeds.



Japanese knotweed. This plant easily establishes itself in many environments, including streams and riverbanks. The plant has a deep root system and can regenerate from cut pieces of the stem. Mowing often spreads the plant along roadways and other open areas. Photo from W. Carter

degrades the water quality and drives up the costs for treating water, an impact which is passed on to the general population. We are experiencing this in the Toe-Cane Watershed with Japanese knotweed, oriental bittersweet, and kudzu. All these plants outcompete and kill the native plants that hold the streambanks in place and form buffers along our streams and rivers. Once these buffers are gone, the streambanks begin to erode quickly. This greatly impacts water quality, but also leads to an increase in flooding, and loss of land and property. Some invasive plants such as silver grass burn very easily and are leading to more intense wildland fires in western NC.

Some of the worst invasive species present here in Toe-Cane Watershed are listed below. Many of these plants also have other common names. It is worth looking up and learning to identify each of these plants:

- Oriental bittersweet, *Celastrus orbiculatus*
- Autumn olive and russian olive, *Elaeagnus umbellata*, *E. angustifolia*
- Japanese knotweed, *Reynoutria japonica*
- Chinese privet, *Ligustrum sinense*
- Bush honeysuckle, *Lonicera tatarica*
- Japanese barberry, *Berberis thunbergii*
- Periwinkle, *Vinca spp.*
- Tree of heaven, *Ailanthus altissima*
- Princess tree/foxtail tree, *Paulownia tomentosa*
- Japanese honeysuckle, *Lonicera japonica*
- Winged burning bush/hearts-a-bustin, *Euonymus alatus*
- English ivy, *Hedera helix*
- Multiflora rose, *Rosa multiflora*
- Mimosa/Silk tree, *Albizia julibrissin*
- Silver grass, *Miscanthus sinensis*
- Japanese stilt-grass, *Microstegium vimineum*
- Kudzu, *Pueraria spp.*

All of these, along with many other invasive plants, are present here in the Toe-Cane Watershed. If you are interested in learning more about invasive plants in NC, the North Carolina Native Plant Society has a very easy to interpret list of invasive species. That list can be found at: ncwildflower.org/invasive-exotic-species-list/.

Many invasive plants are still sold in nurseries. This includes many of the plants listed here. If you are landscaping or buying plants for your garden, consider using native plants. There are several nurseries in the area that specialize in native plants. We have an amazing diversity of beautiful native, flowers, shrubs, and trees that are great for landscaping and will help protect our watershed and offer great wildlife and water ecological benefits. If you choose to plant nonnative plants, consider doing research to insure you won't end up with a large problem down the road. I receive a lot of calls from

folks who planted something 20 years ago, and it has now taken over their garden and yard or is killing the woods behind their house. If you already have something on your property, it may be worth removing it now before it gets worse. It is a case of an ounce of prevention being worth a pound of cure!

Toe Talk is a series supported by local watershed partners highlighting watershed and community news. The Toe-Cane Watershed Coordinator works to improve water quality and gain associated economic benefits in the watershed by providing education and technical resources and implementing on-the-ground projects. See website for project and information: blueridgegcd.com/ or contact: Felix Stith, Blue Ridge Resource Conservation & Development: email toecane.edu@gmail.com or call 828-279-2453.

**LEGAL NOTICE
IN THE GENERAL
COURT OF JUSTICE,
YANCEY COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA
SUPERIOR COURT
DIVISION
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
#21 E 239**

Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of Cleo Robinson of Yancey County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons and corporations having claims against the Estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned on or before the 8th day of December, 2021 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate please make immediate payment.

This the 8th day of September, 2021.
Tyrina Garland
26 Charity Lane
Burnsville, NC 28714
Published September 8, 15, 22, 29, 2021

**LEGAL NOTICE
IN THE GENERAL
COURT OF JUSTICE,
YANCEY COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA
SUPERIOR COURT
DIVISION
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
21 E 177**

Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of Margarette Green of Yancey County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons and corporations having claims against the Estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned on or before the 22nd day of December, 2021 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate please make immediate payment.

This the 22nd day of September, 2021.
Gary Durbin
43 Rose Hill
Burnsville, NC 28714
Published September 22, 29, October 6, 13, 2021

**LEGAL NOTICE
ADVERTISEMENT
FOR UPSET BIDS**

PURSUANT TO the terms and provisions of NCGS 160A-269 The Yancey County Board of Education, (hereinafter "Board"), received an offer to purchase those lands located in Yancey County, North Carolina, more particularly described as follows:

All that contiguous tract or parcel of property containing 4.9 acres, more or less, located at 100 Bald Creek School Road, Burnsville, NC 28714, and commonly known as "The Bald Creek School Property." Said 4.9 acres appearing on The Yancey County GIS maps having PIN No. of 988000643674000. AND BEING further described in deeds recorded of public record, including those deeds recorded at Yancey County Deed Book 143, Page 416;

All that contiguous tract or parcel of property containing 1 acre, more or less, located at 57 Pleasant Valley Road, Burnsville, NC 28714, and commonly known as "The Bald Creek Day-care Property." Said 1 acre appearing on The Yancey County GIS maps having PIN No. of 988000741626000. AND BEING further described in deeds recorded of public record, including those deeds recorded at Yancey County Deed Book 734, Page 652;

All that contiguous tract or parcel of property containing 7.9 acres, more or less, located at 55 Bee Log Road and 21 Bee Log Road, Burnsville, NC 28714, and commonly known as "The Bee Log School Property." Said 7.9 acres appearing on The Yancey County GIS maps having PIN No.'s of 989300107163000 and 989300201329000. AND BEING further described in deeds recorded of public record, including those deeds recorded at Yancey County Deed Book 105, Page 427 and Yancey County Deed Book 688, Page 476, (hereinafter "property").

The Board proposes to accept said offer, which said offer has been accompanied with a deposit of \$36,250.00 which said deposit has been made with the Board. Pursuant to the above referenced statute The Board is now publishing notice of said offer.

The property which is subject to the offer is that property more particularly described herein above.

The amount of the offer made for the purchase of the said property is \$725,000.00 cash or certified funds, pursuant to the terms of an Agreement for Purchase and Sale of Real Property, a copy of which is on file with, and may be obtained from the Clerk to the Board. Contract closing date will be no later than 30 days, on or before November 1, 2021.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that within ten (10) days of the date of this publication any person may raise the bid price by not less than 10% of the first \$1,000.00 of the original bid price of \$725,000.00 and 5% of the remainder. If the bid is raised the bidder shall deposit with the Clerk to the Board 5% of the increased bid and the said Clerk shall re-advertise the offer at the increased bid amount. This procedure shall be repeated until no further qualifying upset bids are received, at which time the Board may accept the offer and sell the property to the highest bidder, or may at any time reject any and all offers including this offer.

This the 22nd day of September, 2021.

Xan Robinson
Clerk to the Yancey County Board of Education
100 School Circle, Burnsville, NC 28714
828-682-6101 ext. 102
rxrobinson@yanceync.net
Published September 22, 2021

Guardian ad Litem volunteers needed

The NC Guardian ad Litem Program is seeking volunteer advocates to represent abused and neglected children in Yancey, Mitchell and Madison.

Please call Erica Edwards at 828-682-4754 or visit volunteerforgal.org for information.

**LEGAL NOTICE
IN THE GENERAL
COURT OF JUSTICE,
YANCEY COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA
SUPERIOR COURT
DIVISION**

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of Ruth Peterson Higgins of Yancey County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons and corporations having claims against the Estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned on or before the 8th day of December, 2021 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate please make immediate payment.

This the 8th day of September, 2021.

Amelia Hoilman
17021 US Hwy 19E
Green Mountain, NC 28740

Published September 8, 15, 22, 29, 2021

**LEGAL NOTICE
IN THE GENERAL
COURT OF JUSTICE,
YANCEY COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA
SUPERIOR COURT
DIVISION**

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS
#21 E 224**

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of Craig Hunter Toft of Yancey County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons and corporations having claims against the Estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned on or before the 8th day of December, 2021 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate please make immediate payment.

This the 8th day of September, 2021.

Robert Morgan Toft
12025 Pioneer Mill Road
Midland, NC 28107-8476
Published September 8, 15, 22, 29, 2021

**LEGAL NOTICE
IN THE GENERAL
COURT OF JUSTICE,
YANCEY COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA
SUPERIOR COURT
DIVISION**

**Administrator / Executor notice
NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of John Kevin Kegley of Yancey County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons and corporations having claims against the Estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned on or before the 22nd day of December, 2021 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate please make immediate payment.

This the 22nd day of September, 2021.

James Kegley
833 South Toe River Road
Burnsville, NC 28714
Published September 22, 29, October 6, 13, 2021

**LEGAL NOTICE
IN THE GENERAL
COURT OF JUSTICE,
YANCEY COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA
SUPERIOR COURT
DIVISION**

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of Jerome Thompson of Yancey County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons and corporations having claims against the Estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned on or before the 1st day of December, 2021 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate please make immediate payment.

This the 1st day of September, 2021.

Katie Thompson
258 Red Maple Drive
Flat Rock, NC 28731
Published September 1, 8, 15, 22, 2021

Times Journal Deadline

Noon on Friday for Wednesday's publication. Located at 22 North Main Street. Phone 828-682-2120.

**LEGAL NOTICE
IN THE GENERAL
COURT OF JUSTICE,
YANCEY COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA
SUPERIOR COURT
DIVISION**

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS
21 E 242**

Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of Matilda Jane McIntosh of Yancey County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons and corporations having claims against the Estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned on or before the 1st day of December, 2021 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate please make immediate payment.

This the 1st day of September, 2021.

Richard Janke
8701 Case Ridge Drive
Oak Ridge, NC 27310
Published September 1, 8, 15, 22, 2021

**LEGAL NOTICE
NOTICE OF
DISCHARGED OF
UNTREATED SEWAGE**

The Town of Burnsville had a discharge of untreated wastewater from our wastewater collection system at a sewer main line located at the intersection of East Main Street and Meadow Road of approximately 1000 gallons. The discharge occurred on September 14, 2021 for approximately 1.5 hours. The untreated wastewater entered an unnamed tributary of Little Crabtree Creek in the French Broad River Basin. The line was repaired and placed back into service to prevent further discharge. This notice was required by NCGS Article 21 Chapter 143.215C. For more information contact Shane Dale, Public Works Director at (828) 682-2420.

Published September 22, 2021

**LEGAL NOTICE
CREDITOR'S NOTICE**

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of Carrie Jane Lunsford Moore, deceased, late of Buncombe County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned Administrator, c/o Koral F. Alman, 422 S. Main Street, Hendersonville, NC 28792 on or before the 22nd day of December, 2021, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment.

Michael Gerald Moore, Administrator of the Estate of Carrie Jane Lunsford Moore, Deceased
Koral F. Alman, Attorney
Van Winkle, Buck, Wall, Starnes & Davis, P.A.
422 S. Main Street
Hendersonville, NC 28792

Published September 22, 29, October 6, 13, 2021.

**LEGAL NOTICE
STATE OF
NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF
YANCEY**

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

the undersigned, having qualified as EXECUTOR of the ESTATE OF ROBERT MELVILLE JOHNSON, deceased, late of Yancey County, North Carolina, notifies all persons having claims against said estate to present them to the undersigned c/o Lisa M. Rothman at McGuire, Wood & Bissette, P.A., PO Box 3180, Asheville, Nc 28802, on or before December 22, 2021, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 22nd day of September, 2021.

FRANCES WILLOW-BROOK BURGESS - JOHNSON A/K/A WILLOW BURGESS - JOHNSON EXECUTOR

ESTATE OF ROBERT MELVILLE JOHNSON

Published September 22, 29, October 6, 13, 2021