



NJ Invasive Species
Strike Team

FoHVOS
FRIENDS OF HOPEWELL VALLEY OPEN SPACE

Strike Team Report July 2021



FoHVOS New Jersey
Invasive Species
Strike Team



Strike Team Community Conference

Foote's Pond Wood, Morristown, NJ

Sunday, September 12th, 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm

(Rain date: Sunday, September 19th, 2:00 pm – 5:00pm)

The Foote's Pond Wood project is a very imperfect work-in-progress, but it demonstrates how local community work and town cooperation can accumulate to a wonderful benefit. The natural park is adjacent to an elementary school and easily accessible by foot, but it was until recently overgrown with 6-8 foot walls of multiflora rose, tree-swallowing porcelain berry vine, and meadow-dominating mugwort, discouraging visitors. In 2016 the Morristown Environmental Commission counted only 14 visitors to the park during 21 hours across 5 nice days in June.

In the last 3-4 years a motley crew of volunteers has reclaimed and is restoring key areas of the park and the town implemented a grant to finish the last two thirds of the gravel trail around the pond. Now there are frequently over 14 visitors per hour as all ages enjoy their happier park. To minimize disturbance to the Sunday park patrons, we will be setting up our tables and tents on the adjacent schoolyard and running tours into the park from there

Registration Fee

The fee to register is \$30, includes a sandwich, snack, and water during the social (see below). [Register Here](#)

Parking Location

Street Parking along James Street and Erskine Drive, adjacent to the Park.

Event Location

Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, 101 James Street, Morristown, NJ 07960 and Foote's Pond Wood Park. The conference will assemble on the southeast lawn of the school, adjacent to the park.

Restrooms

A PortaJohn will be available across from the park at 128 James St, Morristown, NJ 07960.

Please bring

Bug spray, sturdy shoes, and extra water. If you'd like to sit while you eat at the social, please bring a chair.

Activities (2:00 pm – 4:00 pm)

Susan and John Landau of the [Friends of Foote's Pond Wood](#) will lead concurrent 1-hour walks. Each participant will attend both walks successively. John will cover invasive species control efforts and Susan will cover restoration projects, including meadows and tree/shrub plantings.

Hazel England, naturalist and educational director at the Great Swamp Watershed Association will join us to share her knowledge and guidance. Great Brook goes through Foote's Pond on its journey to the Great Swamp. Hazel has extensive experience in watershed management, restorations, green infrastructure, and educational outreach. We will invite other organizations to share their work. Tabletop space for displays can be provided. Please reach out to Mike if your organization has interest.

Post-event Social and Food (4:00 pm – 5:00 pm)

Sandwiches and drinks will be provided during a one-hour post-event social.

Contact

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to Mike Van Clef, Strike Team Program Director!

Email: mvanclenf@fohvos.org; Mobile: 908-528-6674

Crazy Worms

You may have heard that we've recently picked up a new and very dangerous invader! Crazy or Jumping or Asian Worms fit the characters of "invasive" – flexible diet, fast maturity, habitat flexibility, and they can reproduce without a partner (i.e., parthenogenetic).

They have begun infesting forests with the ability to further degrade forest soils and alter native plant communities. Their impacts are similar to other invasive earthworms, but they seem to be more intense as they quickly and finely eliminate the leaf litter leaving behind coffee ground-like castings. Impacts include shifting the balance toward bacteria and away from mycorrhizal fungi that is so important to many native plants. Some have called Jumping Worms "micro-deer herds"!

Solutions are limited but research is being conducted on broad-scale strategies like prescribed fire that may slow down population growth. They move less than 45 feet per year but are getting boosts from humans (eggs in soil on shoes, compost, etc.).

Please help us learn about how quickly and where they are moving by reporting observations to us through the FoHVOS Strike Team app!

To learn more:

- [Cornell's Homeowners Guide to Asian Worms](#)
- [NISAW Webinar – Very Comprehensive Ecological Review](#)

This month's Live and Learn was contributed by Rachel Mackow. Many of us know Rachel as a dedicated conservationist, leading the Stewardship Roundtable and co-owner of Wild Ridge Plants. Rachel shares her stewardship wisdom learned while working with her family to restore their farm and forest in Warren County.

Upcoming Events Register Now

3rd Annual Community Conference

September 12 (rain date of September 19)

Featuring the work of the Friends of Foote's Pond Wood

13th Annual Professional Conference

October 13 – Duke Farms Coach Barn

Featuring the role of prescribed fire for invasive species control

Michael Van Clef

Mike Van Clef, Ph.D.
FoHVOS Stewardship Director
Strike Team Program Director

Lisa Wolff

Lisa Wolff
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space
Executive Director



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Lessons Learned

By Rachael Mackow

Seven years ago, we purchased a home and several acres in Warren County. With the help of friends, we finished the floors and painted the walls, and quickly turned to the outdoors. First on my agenda was – everything.

Once the deer fence was up, I considered our to do list. Convert field to native meadow, plant native privacy hedge, cut Norway maples, shear multiflora rose, yank garlic mustard, smother vinca, locate showy orchis and hepatica in the forest, soil tests, baseline survey, and so on.

The list is still long. Multiple projects are ongoing. Others have to wait. The most successful projects are those that are focused, feasible, and have maintenance schedules – that we adhere to! The sticking point on most restorations is this: there are good plans and bad plans, but no perfect answers. No solution fixes everything.

Here are three key elements that have helped us be successful:

1. Set intentions, assess resources, establish a plan, and go for it.
2. Consider the site – plants thrive in places they're suited for. What's already growing on site? Perhaps tall plants that like sun and fertility. Are species that you'd like to plant in harmony or opposition?
3. Ground preparation – this often means removing or thinning unwanted plants, and possibly rehabilitating the soil.
4. Planting or seeding in appropriate density – a small space with many plants will often do better than a vast space with few plants. Plants grow in communities
5. Maintenance – ongoing. Mowing, weeding, replanting. Tilt the balance towards native. Restorations are dynamic. Things change.

SAVE THE DATE!

13th Annual Professional Conference Duke Farms Coach Barn October 13, 2021

***As the year progresses, we'll keep tabs on COVID restrictions and set an agenda and open registration once we have confidence that we'll have an all clear by fall. We're very much hoping to see you all!*

Volunteer with us!

Looking for a volunteer opportunity?
The NJ Invasive Species Strike Team is the organization for you!
Visit our sign up genius below to share your interests with us.
Contact lhovath@fohvos.org for more information.

[I'm Interested!](#)

The Strike Team needs your help to fight invasive species throughout New Jersey. By making a membership donation, you directly fund our efforts to keep invasive species at bay and protect our native plants and wildlife. Donate through the link below!

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Dr. Michael Van Clef
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space

Lisa Wolff
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