



NJ Invasive Species
Strike Team

FoHIVOS
FRIENDS OF HOPEWELL VALLEY OPEN SPACE

Happy New Year!

The Strike Team was kept hopping in 2021! With delays in 2020 due to COVID, our intrepid interns had to work until Christmas to finish up all of our grants and contracts. We finished up our three-year US Forest Service grant with significant accomplishments:

- **56:** 10-Year Invasive Species Management Plans covering 25,000 acres
- **1,700:** Populations eradicated



- **7:** Training sessions reaching 200 participants
- **7,500:** Volunteer treatment hours (private landowners)
- **170:** Acres of treated dense infestations

All of the above was accomplished by our seasonal interns and conservation partners including Mercer County Parks, Monmouth County Parks, New Jersey Conservation Foundation and New Jersey Audubon. A special acknowledgement is required for the dozens of private landowners that completed an astonishing amount of work!



Private landowner Carla Lee Lewis is on a mission to restore her beautiful property in the Limestone Valley region of New Jersey, wiping out many acres of invasives and planting native species inside of deer exclosures. We were happy to contribute a small part to her efforts.

Onward to 2022!

Michael Van Cleaf

Lisa Wolff

Live and Learn

Deer Hunting for Forests and Food Tanya Sulikowski



This month's Live and Learn was contributed by Tanya Sulikowski. With many accomplishments under her belt in the service of nature, she describes her newfound role in balancing the deer population and restoring the native ecosystem at her home.

*When I was eight I spent an entire summer day catching monarch butterflies and stuffing them through the narrow neck of a clear glass jug. I dropped some blades of grass into the opening and fell asleep watching my living art project. As kids do, I moved onto my next adventure and rediscovered the jug a week later. The grass rotted and the butterflies were dead. I was devastated.

Now, I am an ecologist. Perhaps that foundational childhood experience taught me to think of myself as a component of our living system, rather than an observer. Now I try to stay connected through my organic vegetable garden, backyard habitat restoration project and work in our statewide ecological community.

This year, I am learning to hunt. Overabundant deer put extraordinary pressure on our native vegetation that creates a cascading impact down to the tiniest soil microorganisms. This imbalance allows invasive species to thrive. Knowing the consequences of deer overpopulation, I feel that by hunting I can help contribute to the solution, at least in my own small way. In addition, venison is a local, healthy food source. Unlike farm-raised meat, deer don't require the land, water, chemical and energy inputs of agriculture.

Hunting isn't easy. You have to learn the animal and the land and the tools and the rules. Participating in the world from a tree stand is a whole new experience and I've learned lessons I never would have from the ground. I've been swayed to sleep by a tree, watched a squirrel deconstruct an entire black walnut, heard an owl fly out of its roost and smelled a snowstorm coming. At first, I wasn't sure I would be able to pull my crossbow trigger, thinking back to the monarchs and all the other plants and animals I have come to love. But harvesting the animal is a small part of the process, and my success has filled our freezer and reduced pressure on our ecosystem.

I'm grateful to be a part of our living environment in a whole new way but I'm most thankful to the creatures that have taught me so much.

[Click for: NJ Hunter Education
Program Website](#)

[Click for: NJ Women in the Outdoors
Website](#)

Upcoming Events

February 16, 6:00pm-7:00pm, Zoom

- DelVal One Health Seminar - Invasive Species for Homeowners

March 9, 10:15-11:15am, Location TBD

- Somerset County Master Gardeners - Invasive Species Identification and Control

March 12, Time and Location TBD

- Essex County Master Gardeners - Invasive Species Identification and Control

June 3, 9:00am-3:00pm, Clover Rod and Gun Club, Kingwood Township, NJ

- New Jersey Tree Farm Day - Invasive Species Identification and Control (with field tours)

June 23, 6:00pm-7:00pm, Zoom

- Duke Farms Master Ecologist Program – Invasive Species and Deer Management

June 25, 10:00am-12:00pm, Duke Farms Visitor Center

- Duke Farms Master Ecologist Program – Invasive Species and Deer Management

Late Summer 2022 -- 4th Annual Community Conference, Location TBD

Fall 2022 -- Potluck Social (start foraging and thinking of recipes now!), Location TBD

Fall 2022 -- 14th Annual Professional Conference, Duke Farms

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 mvanclef@fohvos.org for more information.

[I'm Interested!](#)

Consider a Membership Donation:

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!

[Donate](#)

Contributing Partners



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Fox Foundation

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