



# BCT Stewardship Journal: February 2026

## Katie's Thoughts from the Trail: Invasives: The Other Side of the Coin

We've all heard about the perils of Asiatic bittersweet, the havoc of Japanese knotweed, and then of course the invasion of English ivy. It's frustrating to think about these noxious species purposely or accidentally being brought here; But there are two sides to the coin. Other countries and regions also deal with the repercussions of Eastern US species being brought over and wreaking havoc on their ecosystems. Here are some of those species that we consider native but are foreign with disastrous impacts elsewhere:

### Lanceleaf Coreopsis

A great plant for our local pollinator gardens but an incredibly invasive plant in the meadows of Japan. It has been listed as an invasive plant in Japan since 2006 and is considered one of the worst invasive plants in the country.

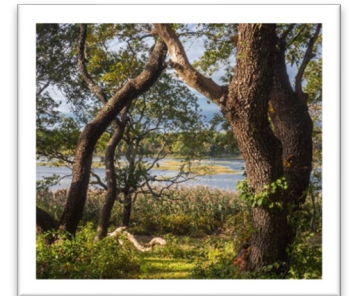


### Eastern Grey Squirrel

The introduction of the eastern grey squirrel to the UK, Ireland, and Italy has caused the native red squirrel populations to decrease significantly. They also are notorious for harming native European trees and plants causing significant damage to the European forestry industry every year. In fact, the grey squirrel is listed in the Invasive Alien Species of Union Concern and is illegal to import or breed in the European Union.

### Black Cherry

Highly common to our forests on Cape Cod, this tree was introduced to English gardens in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. While black cherry is kept in check in our ecosystem, in Europe it produces a high number of seedlings that form dense thickets which negatively impact native plant communities and forest regeneration. In fact, in Europe, it is often referred to as "the forest plague".



### Raccoon

A very familiar species to us in the US, raccoons were introduced to Europe in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century for their fur. Escapes and intentional stockings quickly led to an irreversible invasion in not only Europe, but Japan as well. Raccoons have caused significant declines in the native amphibian, reptile, and ground-nesting bird populations. Additionally, they have spread multiple diseases such as rabies to both human and wildlife populations.

### Common Milkweed

Another popular pollinator plant for us but severely invasive for others is common milkweed. Its windborne seeds and aggressive rhizomes have led to this plant being classified as one of the top invasive species in countries such as Ukraine, especially in agricultural regions.

