

## Best Practices for Conservation at Hazelhurst

### **Keep English ivy and Oriental bittersweet out of the trees.**

*English ivy* is an aggressive invasive that can kill mature trees. See conservation chair if you desire published research. Start with your site, and then move on to remove ivy from the base of tree trunks everywhere. Cut the vines at ankle level, and again at waist level. Leave the upper part on the bark; it will die. Pull the vines away from the base of the trunk. There is no justification for letting ivy climb a tree, bloom and berry, making thousands of new seeds to be spread around camp. It has already consumed too many acres of our property, and will continue all the way to the beach grass if allowed.

To kill English ivy on the ground, there are several options. You can pull it and lay it in a designated brush pile. You can cover it with black landscape cloth for a full year, and then rake up the dead vines, cover the area with a heavy layer of leaves, and then start over with a mixture of native plants such as ginger, wild strawberries, Virginia creeper, Solomon's seal, Virginia bluebells, celandine poppy, perennial geraniums, numerous varieties of ferns, etc. (See plant lists). The best result will be mostly leaves - *not* a green carpet. Visit natural unspoiled forests in the area to see how it should look, or look inside Oak Rd, mentally removing the myrtle and ivy that is re-invading.

*Bittersweet* is a very obvious problem all over camp. Site holders are responsible for removing the vines around their area, and help remove them from shared areas. Bittersweet will not only prevent young trees from being able to grow, but will literally pull trees over, bending them to the ground and killing them. Examples are easy to see all over camp.

### **Remove invasive species where possible.**

These include burning bush, shrub honeysuckle, vine honeysuckle, jetbead, buckthorn, privet, garlic mustard, English ivy, pachysandra, boxwood, barberry, and Oriental bittersweet, among others.

### **When you plant, plant natives.**

We want our sites and our woods to be (more) healthy duneland and forest on Lake Michigan. Natives will thrive here naturally. Insects, birds and mammals thrive in the presence of their native flora. **DO NOT BUY OR PLANT** exotic plants or trees from a nursery or your home. No exotic

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grass, bush or tree, even if they are not “invasive”, is appropriate for planting inside camp. We have dozens of beautiful choices that thrive and belong in a duneland forest. For help with selections, consult our Hazelhurst reference list, ask the conservation chair for help, or discuss it with a horticulture or environmental professional.

### **Brush piles**

Both woody brush and vines are ok. Please do NOT add leaves. Leaves can be used as mulch on land around a site, or piled deep enough to kill a patch of unwanted invasives. Brush piles are removed by camp caretaker with a forklift.

### **Leaves**

In general, leave leaves alone. That’s what good forest soil is *made* of. If you must clear some, make a pile in the woods, but *never* pile leaves down the side of a ravine. Adding an unnatural amount of leaves into any water system (pond, or creek) disturbs the natural balance, and hurts the creatures who live in the water.

### **“Topsoil”**

During construction/renovation, DO NOT allow contractors to bring in topsoil. They must use *only* the soil at the site to grade a site. Outside topsoil is full of many dangerous weeds for our setting.

### **“Flat-topping”**

Using a weed-wacker or other equipment to “flat-top” any area is not good for desired tree seedlings that are trying to emerge through the undergrowth. Even the mighty oak tree has to start out small and have room and light to grow. Additionally, “whacking” an invasive usually makes it grow more aggressively, being in effect a pruning that encourages more and more new growth. In particular, when this is done to English ivy, it hastens the development of what is known as “ivy desert.” Look it up online to see some devastating photos.

### **Consider sound**

We cannot always avoid loud sounds, but when we can, we should. Pretend you’re a toad, a chipmunk, a fox, a nesting bird, a snake, a song bird in the tree or an owl scoping out tonight’s hunting ground..... The assault of power blowers, mowers, weed wackers is terrifying. Please

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think about this. Can it be done with a rake? hand pruners? loppers? a hand saw? Choose to not terrify natives.

We share this special place, Hazelhurst. Let's keep it special.