

2024 Ontario Invasive Plant Council Conference

(As of December 7th, 2023)

FINDING *a* BALANCE

Agenda

Date Thursday, January 18th, 2024

Time 9:00am-5:00pm EST

Location *Virtually hosted on Remo.co (Registration required at <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/736337223457?aff=oddtcreator>)*

Theme: The theme for this year's conference is: **Finding a Balance**. We will examine the importance of finding a balanced approach to invasive species management by considering different perspectives, management approaches, and goals. The conference will encourage people to broaden their perspectives and cooperate to find a balance towards healthy ecosystems and biodiversity in a changing climate. There will be opportunities to explore strategies, programs, and partnerships. This can lead to an integrated and balanced approach towards the management of invasive species.

Schedule

Time (EST)	Speaker	Notes
9:00am	System Opens	
9:00-9:30	Morning Mix and Mingle	
9:30-9:45	Brandon Williamson , President Ontario Invasive Plant Council Emily Mitchell Ontario Invasive Plant Council	Welcome & Introduction
9:45-10:00	Mary Lou and Dan Smoke Celebrated Indigenous Elders and knowledge holders	Opening Prayer
10:00-10:10	Emily Mitchell Ontario Invasive Plant Council	Remo How-to
10:10 – 10:30	Brandon Williamson , President Ontario Invasive Plant Council	Ontario Invasive Plant Council Program Updates



	Emily Mitchell Ontario Invasive Plant Council	
10:30-10:45	Canadian Council on Invasive Species	TBC
10:45-11:45	Tom Hilditch Founder and President, Colucent Environmental Inc.	Keynote Speaker – Finding Balance in a Changing World
11:45-12:30	LUNCH BREAK	
Finding a Balance –Comprehensive Invasive Plant Management in Ontario		
12:30-1:10	Youth Nature Keepers - Empowering Youth for Environmental Change	Speakers: <i>Youth Nature Keepers, Canadian Council on Invasive Species</i>
1:10-1:30	TBC	TBC
1:30-1:50	Indigenous-led Land Restoration in Toronto's High Park: Rebalancing Relations through Indigenous Leadership	Speakers: <i>Rebecca Beaulne-Stuebing, 440 Parkside Collective</i>
1:50- 2:10	TBC	TBC
2:10-2:20	BREAK	
Concurrent Sessions Finding a Balance – Targeted Invasive Species Management		
2:20 -2:30	Emily Mitchell Ontario Invasive Plant Council	How-to for concurrent sessions
	Concurrent Session 1 – Invasive Species	Concurrent Session 2 – Invasive Plants
2:30-2:50	Improving Oak Wilt Management Through Research on Beetle Vector Ecology <i>Violet Butterwort, Ontario Forest Research Institute, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry</i>	Mobilizing the Community Through a Coordinated Response to Invasive Himalayan Balsam <i>Derissa Vincentini, Invasive Species Centre</i>
2:50-3:10	TBC	Woodland Angelica- Add This Plant to Your Watch List <i>Susan Ellis, Friends of Second Marsh</i>
3:10-3:30	TBC	Kudzu Control In Southern Ontario <i>Nancy Cain, Cain Vegetation Inc.</i>
3:30-3:40	BREAK	
Finding a Balance – Ontario and Beyond!		
3:40-4:10	Managing Invasive Species in a Construction Setting and Protection of Species at Risk (SAR) Habitat	<i>Speakers: Lindsay Bennett, Tyler Oglan, Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority and Bridging North America</i>
4:00-4:20	TBC	TBC
4:20-4:35	Brandon Williamson , President Ontario Invasive Plant Council Emily Mitchell Ontario Invasive Plant Council	Interactive discussion & closing remarks
4:35-5:00	Evening Mix and Mingle	
5:00pm	Event Closes	

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Tom Hilditch, Founder and President, Colucent Environmental Inc.

Tom's career is rooted in the study and understanding of botany and vegetated landscapes in Ontario. He has completed field surveys of thousands of hectares of natural areas in this province. During his 42-year consulting career, Tom has worked in the areas of impact assessment, mitigation planning and ecological planning and design. He has developed specialized expertise with Species at Risk legislation, policies, guidelines and permitting processes.

From 2016 to 2020, Tom served as the Environmental Stewardship Commissioner on behalf of Henvey Inlet, Magnetawan and Shawanaga First Nations in Ontario, during the construction of a 300 MW renewable wind energy facility. He worked closely with First Nations Chiefs, Councils, and community members as he oversaw the significant energy project, understanding and bridging perspectives amongst the federal government, private sector proponents and First Nations.

Tom currently serves as the Chair of the Ontario Biodiversity Council. He also chairs Ontario's Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO). Tom serves on the Board of Directors of the Anishinabek/Ontario Fisheries Resources (A/OFRFC). He is a well-regarded environmental expert, a speaker and a published author.

Finding Balance in a Changing World

We continue to face unusual and trying times. Within a landscape that seems to be pushed beyond sustainability, invasive species are a persistent and disturbing threat. We face that threat together, as funds and resources seem perpetually inadequate to fully address the task at hand. In this world of geopolitical disruption, viral threats, social unrest and an abundance of anger, balance seems more elusive.

With unprecedented challenges come new opportunities, that are open for those who listen deeply and who open their hearts and minds to all perspectives. Tom will share how we might meet these challenges, differently, as he reflects on his personal and professional journey. He will draw from 42 years of botanical and ecological experience and will offer some of the nature-based lesson he has learned. His presentation will place these ideas within the context of Ontario's renewed Biodiversity Strategy, issued in May 2023.

SPEAKERS

FINDING A BALANCE– COMPREHENSIVE INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT



Speakers

Youth Nature Keepers, Canadian Council on Invasive Species

TBC

440 Parkside Collective

Indigenous-led Land Restoration in Toronto's High Park: Rebalancing Relations through Indigenous Leadership

Speaker kindly asked us to not share their bios or abstract in the agenda

FINDING A BALANCE – TARGETTED INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT

CONCURRENT SESSION 1 – FINDING A BALANCE – INVASIVE SPECIES



Violet Butterworth, Ontario Forest Research Institute, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Dr. Violet Butterworth is a Forest Health Researcher with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Her work includes studies on the detection, invasion potential, and ecology of insects/fungi. In her current role she performs forest pathology diagnostics for Ontario and conducts research on tree diseases like oak wilt.

Improving Oak Wilt Management Through Research on Beetle Vector Ecology

In 2023, oak wilt was detected for the first time in Canada. The disease can spread when spores of an invasive fungal pathogen, *Bretziella fagacearum*, are moved by Nitidulidae beetles from recently killed trees to newly wounded oaks. There are more than a hundred Nitidulidae species in Canada. Information about vector competency and behavior are needed to adopt management and detection strategies. Beetle flight activity was recorded in Canada from 2018 to 2023 using artificial tree wounds and flight traps. Twenty-one species of Nitidulidae visited oak wounds but only three species made 80% of visits to new wounds, which are critical for infection to occur. The three species were *Carpophilus sayi*, *Colopterus truncatus*, and *Epuraea avara*. Flight of *C. truncatus* and *C. sayi* mostly occurred from April to July 31st whereas flight activity of *E. avara* continued into late summer. Preliminary evidence suggests that the risk of oak wilt infection is low prior to bud break because beetles aren't visiting wounds. The highest risk occurs between bud break and July 31st when all three suspect vectors are actively flying and visiting wounds, and host tree susceptibility to infection is greatest due to early wood development. Risk decreases after July as flight activity decreases for two of the three suspect vectors. These research findings have provided essential information to aid in oak wilt detection and management.

CONCURRENT SESSION 2 – FINDING A BALANCE – TARGETTED INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT



Derissa Vincentini, Invasive Species Centre

Derissa Vincentini is the Community Science Coordinator and GIS Lead with the ISC where she coordinates invasive species education and outreach initiatives, promoting community action to mitigate the introduction and spread of invasive species in Canada. She also plays a supporting role in many other projects using her GIS skills to collect geospatial data for understanding the extent of priority invasive species on the landscape. Derissa has a background as a Forest Research Technician and an undergraduate degree in Biology as well as a certificate in Geomatics from Algoma University.

Mobilizing the Community Through a Coordinated Response to Invasive Himalayan Balsam

The Invasive Species Centre teamed up with local organizations to tackle the growing Himalayan balsam population in Sault Ste. Marie by educating the public on identification, prevention, reporting and management. The goal of this city-wide Himalayan Balsam Community Project was to inspire and encourage the community to get involved in protecting their local environment against invasive species. With funding and support from the City of Sault Ste Marie, the team consisting of Non-Governmental Organizations and post-secondary institutions planned a summer of public pulls, outreach activities, contests and coordinated outreach. A multifaceted approach to marketing and advertising was used to achieve increased exposure and recruit volunteers for the project. By working together, this project achieved more than the sum of individual organization efforts would have achieved working separately. This resulted in successfully hosting seven public pull events with additional individual efforts, increased community member reports and increased awareness of not only Himalayan balsam but many other invasive species within the area. This

presentation will discuss the successes and lessons learned from the first year of the pilot project and how similar projects could be implemented in other areas.



Susan Ellis, Friends of Second Marsh

Susan Ellis is a retired Project Engineer and Innovation Specialist. She is also a longtime volunteer with Friends of Second Marsh and for the last four years, a member of their Board of Directors. In 2023, Susan became the Lead Steward for the Friends of Second Marsh Plant Stewardship Subcommittee.

Woodland Angelica- Add This Plant to Your Watch List

Populations of Woodland Angelica in Nova Scotia are overwhelming natural landscapes. This dominant introduced plant is present in Quebec and Ontario. Under management at isolated areas in Mclaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve by Friends of Second Marsh (FSM), we are beginning to see positive signs of plant management actions. After planned management in 2024, FSM will be ready to draft a guideline for small scale manual management procedures for 1st and 2nd year plants. These techniques might also be effective on other similar plant species like Wild Parsnip. We expect better proof of efficacy by 2025. It is never too soon to look for and manage emerging colonies. We look forward to share what we have learned.



Nancy Cain, Cain Vegetation Inc.

Nancy Cain is a landscape horticulturist, ISA certified arborist and a vegetation management and pest control specialist. Extensive experience in landscape establishment and management of native plant communities including environmental impacts on plants. She carries out pesticide efficacy and crop tolerance research trials as well as consulting in control of invasive weeds and IPM approaches for pest control.

Kudzu Control in Southern Ontario

A lakeside bank in southern Ontario was planted with a thick cover of Kudzu. This was the only stand of this weed in Canada. Kudzu is a serious, invasive weed and has invaded about 3,000,000 ha of land in the United States. The plant has perennial stolons that root at the nodes and viny stems with leaves that resemble large soybean leaves. These perennial stems can grow to Each crown puts down deep roots and a narrow tuber that can grow to 180 km and

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diameters of 18 cm. The viny stems (both new stems and leafy stems wrap around any woody growth and the plants cover trees of any size, shading the leaves and pulling trees and shrubs down. A program of control was developed for control of kudzu on this site. Over a 9 year period which will culminate in 2024 the site has been cleared of kudzu and replanted to prairie plants and shrubs including staghorn sumac and red osier dogwood. This presentation will discuss the biology and threat of this plant and the progress of control on a challenging sloped site over the last decade.

FINDING A BALANCE – ONTARIO AND BEYOND!



Lindsay Bennett, Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority and Bridging North America

Lindsay Bennett is the Manager, Environmental for the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority, a not-for-profit Canadian Crown Corporation responsible for the delivery of the Gordie Howe International Bridge project. Before joining WDBA in 2017, Lindsay contributed to the Ecological Assessment of Long Point Bay, invasive Phragmites control pilot research in Rondeau Bay and private land stewardship across southwestern Ontario. Lindsay uses her background in conservation to mitigate construction impacts on the environment.



Tyler Oglan, Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority and Bridging North America

Tyler Oglan is an environmental specialist with 10 years of experience in both the construction and automotive industries. He has led environmental monitoring programs on several large-value infrastructure projects, and is currently the Environmental Monitoring Manager for the Gordie Howe International Bridge project. Tyler has a strong knowledge of the Species at Risk Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Migratory Bird Convention Act, the Provincial Policy Statement, and municipal guidance documents as they apply to the natural environment in both rural and urban settings. He has experience using a combination of background research, geographic information services, and site investigations to identify habitat and constraints.

Managing Invasive Species in a Construction Setting and Protection of Species at Risk (SAR) Habitat

Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority (WDBA) is a not-for-profit Canadian Crown corporation responsible for delivery of the Gordie Howe International Bridge project through a public-private partnership (P3). We are responsible for overseeing our P3 partner, Bridging North America (BNA), through construction and operation of the new crossing.

The Gordie Howe International Bridge project is North America's largest bi-national infrastructure project valued at \$5.7 billion (CDN). It includes the delivery of four major components – the longest cable-stayed bridge and largest US and Canadian ports of entry (POE) along the Canada-US border as well as a connection into the Michigan Interstate system. Canadian components of the project fall under the Bridge to Strengthen Trade Act (BSTA). The Act required plans to be developed and updated for each phase of the project with specific deliverables, including species at risk



management and invasive species control. The plans outline mitigation and protection measures that have been established across project sites to address sensitive habitat and minimize impacts while constructing and operating a large and busy international border crossing. WDBA and BNA are committed to protecting the environment both on and adjacent to the project site. Black Oak Heritage Park, located south of the project, is a natural area of land with one of the largest stands of Black Oak Savanna in Ontario – one of the most endangered habitats in Canada. Invasive species management, specifically invasive Phragmites, has proven to be challenging on such a complex infrastructure project. In response, a diverse management approach and control program have been implemented to limit the spread of invasive species and protect/enhance the ecological integrity of adjacent natural habitat.

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