

Dense mats of nonnative lesser celandine make it impossible for native flowers to grow

Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council News

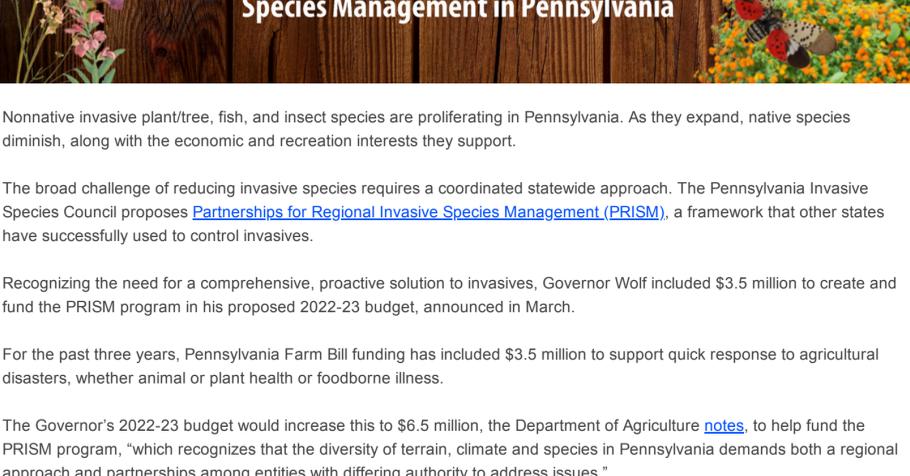
Issue 3: May 10, 2022

Action on invasive species is increasing around the state, with efforts to support a new Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management program, launch of the first Pennsylvania Native Species Day to raise awareness of the threat from invasive nonnative species, and more.

Check out the latest below, and please consider sharing this newsletter or the [PISC News signup page](#) with your networks.

—[Kris Abell](#), Coordinator, Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council

Governor Proposes \$3.5 Million to Create Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management



Nonnative invasive plant/tree, fish, and insect species are proliferating in Pennsylvania. As they expand, native species diminish, along with the economic and recreation interests they support.

The broad challenge of reducing invasive species requires a coordinated statewide approach. The Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council proposes [Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management \(PRISM\)](#), a framework that other states have successfully used to control invasives.

Recognizing the need for a comprehensive, proactive solution to invasives, Governor Wolf included \$3.5 million to create and fund the PRISM program in his proposed 2022-23 budget, announced in March.

For the past three years, Pennsylvania Farm Bill funding has included \$3.5 million to support quick response to agricultural disasters, whether animal or plant health or foodborne illness.

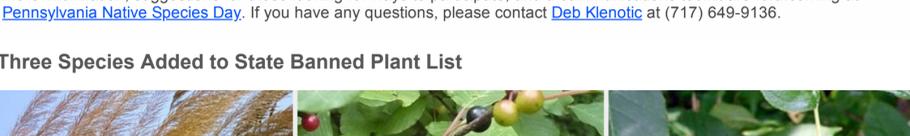
The Governor's 2022-23 budget would increase this to \$6.5 million, the Department of Agriculture [notes](#), to help fund the PRISM program, "which recognizes that the diversity of terrain, climate and species in Pennsylvania demands both a regional approach and partnerships among entities with differing authority to address issues."

The proposed funding for the PRISM program now just needs to be approved by the General Assembly. If approved, PRISM could begin in late 2022 or early 2023.

The funds would go to the Department of Agriculture, which, with the assistance of PISC, would establish and administer PRISM. Through a request-for-proposals process, six regional coordinating organizations would be established across the state.

[Learn more about how PRISM would work](#) to identify, manage, and reduce invasive species.

Join in the First Pennsylvania Native Species Day, June 17



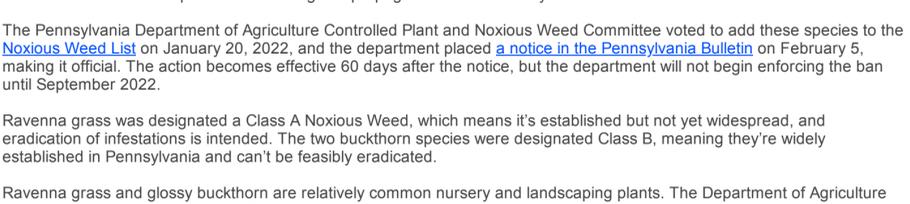
The Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council invites everyone to join in the first [Pennsylvania Native Species Day](#) on Friday, June 17.

Help more Pennsylvanians learn about and celebrate native plants, trees, fish, and other species and understand the pressures that nonnative invasive species present.

There are many actions that educators, farmers, community organizations, business owners, local governments, and residents can take to help increase awareness of and protect Pennsylvania's native species.

More information, suggestions for those looking for ways to participate, and a communications toolkit are forthcoming at [Pennsylvania Native Species Day](#). If you have any questions, please contact [Deb Kenotic](#) at (717) 649-9136.

Three Species Added to State Banned Plant List



Ravenna grass (*Tripsidium ravennae*), common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), and glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*) have been added to the list of plants that are illegal to propagate or sell in Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Committee voted to add these species to the [Noxious Weed List](#) on January 20, 2022, and the department placed [a notice in the Pennsylvania Bulletin](#) on February 5, making it official. The action becomes effective 60 days after the notice, but the department will not begin enforcing the ban until September 2022.

Ravenna grass was designated a Class A Noxious Weed, which means it's established but not yet widespread, and eradication of infestations is intended. The two buckthorn species were designated Class B, meaning they're widely established in Pennsylvania and can't be feasibly eradicated.

Ravenna grass and glossy buckthorn are relatively common nursery and landscaping plants. The Department of Agriculture offers an [exemption application \(PDF\)](#) process for glossy buckthorn that may be considered by breeders who own the rights to varieties that have been researched and proven sterile.

Noxious weeds are determined to be injurious to public health, crops, livestock, and agricultural land or other property and cannot be sold, transported, planted, or otherwise propagated in Pennsylvania.

For questions regarding the listing of these two species as noxious weeds in Pennsylvania, please contact the [Department of Agriculture](#).

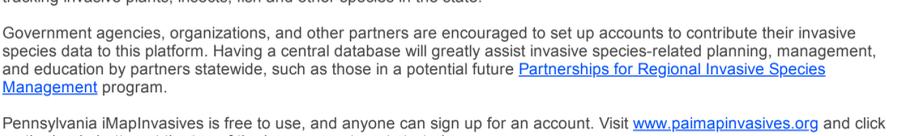
New Tool Prioritizes 140+ Invasive Plants of Concern for Pennsylvania



To help decision makers and researchers, Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council members have compiled 140+ invasive plant species they consider of greatest concern in the [Pennsylvania Invasive Plant Species List](#), and given each an overall priority score from 1 to 10 based on a number of criteria.

Searchable and sortable, the list also includes the common and scientific name of each species; indicates whether it's already in the state or a nearby threat; notes whether it's on the Pennsylvania Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed List; and scores its invasiveness, threat to state lands and natural areas, and importance to the landscape and nursery industry.

Pennsylvania iMapInvasives: The Central Database for Tracking Invasive Species Statewide



Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council members voted to have [Pennsylvania iMapInvasives](#) be the central database for tracking invasive plants, insects, fish and other species in the state.

Government agencies, organizations, and other partners are encouraged to set up accounts to contribute their invasive species data to this platform. Having a central database will greatly assist invasive species-related planning, management, and education by partners statewide, such as those in a potential future [Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management](#) program.

Pennsylvania iMapInvasives is free to use, and anyone can sign up for an account. Visit [www.pamapinvasives.org](#) and click on the log-in button at the top of the home page to get started.

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage program launched Pennsylvania iMapInvasives in 2013 to enable tracking of invasive species occurrences across the state and provide natural resource professionals a way to record their invasive species management.

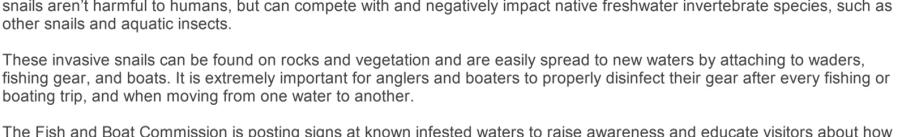
To date, over 50,000 data records have been contributed by more than 2,000 users, including land managers, teachers and students, members of the public, and others.

- A sampling of the tools offered includes:
- Data entry via the online database, two mobile apps, and bulk loading
 - o Data accepted: presence, not detected, and treatment (examples of treatment data include chemical applications or mechanical removals, among others)
 - Data filters and querying capabilities
 - Data mapping
 - Reports (i.e., geographic species analyses)
 - Data exports (CSV, GDB, SHP)
 - Email alerts—an easy way to stay informed of new and novel findings

Once invasive species location data is entered into iMapInvasives' geographic information system (GIS), registered users and their organizations can use the platform as their own personal clearinghouse. Filtering tools give users the option of viewing only their data or everyone's data on invasive species in their area. As needed, information can be designated as confidential.

All data in iMapInvasives are expert vetted, allowing users to conduct trusted species analyses, prioritize areas for future management, map predicted rates of spread, and develop risk assessments.

Public Urged to Help Prevent Spread of New Zealand Mudsnails



Recent surveys by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and partner organizations have [detected tiny New Zealand mudsnails \(Potamopyrgus antipodarum\)](#)—roughly the size of a match head—in several popular cold water trout fisheries in central and eastern Pennsylvania.

New Zealand mudsnails have the potential to reach densities of hundreds or even thousands of snails per square foot. These snails aren't harmful to humans, but can compete with and negatively impact native freshwater invertebrate species, such as other snails and aquatic insects.

These invasive snails can be found on rocks and vegetation and are easily spread to new waters by attaching to waders, fishing gear, and boats. It is extremely important for anglers and boaters to properly disinfect their gear after every fishing or boating trip, and when moving from one water to another.

The Fish and Boat Commission is posting signs at known infested waters to raise awareness and educate visitors about how to properly disinfect gear. The public is encouraged to [report suspected New Zealand mudsnails or other aquatic invasive species to the Fish and Boat Commission](#) or [PA iMapInvasives](#).

Resources and Opportunities for Your Organization

Grant opportunity: Proposals sought for invasive species management strategies

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is [soliciting applications to conduct agricultural research](#) in a range of areas related to agriculture's role in stewarding natural resources and innovations in combatting and adapting to climate change. One of the areas of focus: Identifying strategies for invasive species management.

Applicants must submit a complete electronic research project proposal and grant application using the Department of Community and Economic Development's [Electronic Single Application website](#). Deadline: Friday, May 13, 2022, at 4:00 P.M.

Questions regarding the online application process may be directed to Morgan Sheffield, Grants Coordinator, at (717) 787-3568.

Opportunity in Erie to Re-home aquarium pets: Pet Amnesty Day, May 21

Home aquariums are a popular hobby in the United States. Unfortunately, they're one of the primary ways aquatic invasive species are spread into waterways and lakes.

When owners decide they no longer want or can care for the animals and plants in their aquariums, they often release them into the natural environment, where they can become harmful invasive species. Over 150 species considered pets have spread to new habitats worldwide this way.

Pennsylvania Sea Grant, the Herps Alive Foundation, and the Erie Humane Society are hosting "Erie Pet Amnesty Day" on Saturday, May 21, to encourage the connection between responsible pet ownership and environmental stewardship.

Fish, turtles, lizards, snakes, and other aquarium pets may be surrendered at the Erie Humane Society.

This event gives aquarium pet owners a safe, convenient, and humane alternative to release that will prevent the introduction and spread of potential aquatic invasive species in Pennsylvania.

For more information on Erie Pet Amnesty Day, or to receive information on how to host a pet amnesty event in your area, please contact [Sara Stahman](#).

Share-worthy blog post: Great native plants, and the birds and insects they attract

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources notes that one of the best ways to help wildlife, including pollinators and birds, is to grow native plants. In a recent blog post, [Bring life to your Yard with Native Plants](#), they list a number of native plants and shrubs and, for each, the particular birds and pollinators that rely on them for food.

Instructional video: Look for blooming invasive lesser celandine now

Now is the time to look for one of the earliest blooming invasive plants: lesser celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*). This plant is commonly found near rivers and stream banks in dense mats that quickly choke out native spring ephemerals. This [Department of Conservation and Natural Resources video shows you how to identify and remove lesser celandine](#).

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