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Happy Holidays to all the Forest Hero! Volunteers

Hello all, this has been a year of great shifts. It started with both me and Heather welcoming our first-born children into the world. It continued with the onset of a worldwide pandemic which saw so many elements of everyone's lives and work come screeching to a halt or drawing concern for those with work that needed to continue. Some people blossomed with unaccounted for time, and others were swallowed up by the responsibilities and stress of life, work, and family. Some of us adjusted to masked 6-ft apart hikes, Zoom meetings, and video calls to family, and others have felt more isolated than ever before. Through these shifts, I have continued to think of you all, your dedication to the conservation of Vermont, and how you may be fairing. It has not quite felt like the right time to send a newsletter, and it feels like another shift is coming – but on an upward trajectory. Here's to the end of this year, and to the start of a new year filled with hope. If anyone understands a seemingly upward struggle, it is you all, as volunteers who care about the forest health issue of invasive species. As Elseley writes in *The Star Thrower*, "the task was not to be assumed lightly, for it was men as well as starfish that we sought to save". To my fellow star throwers, may this new year bring you all love and light.

Cheers

Elizabeth Spinney



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Resources

Western and Indigenous Approaches to Invasive Species

A good presentation sharing cultural perspectives on invasive species management. [Check out the recorded presentation here.](#)



Invasive Species Control Using Goats

Learn more about an emerging trend in mechanical management of invasive plants - goats! [Check out the recorded presentation](#)



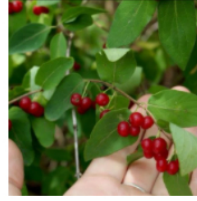
[here](#).



News

Invasive Shrubs Unlikely Culprit in Case of Water Quality

Scientists are learning that invasive bush honeysuckle has negative effects on aquatic ecosystems. [Check out the full article here](#).



Some Invasive Plants Have a Leafy Advantage Over Native Plants

A first of its kind regional-scale study compared leaf timing for invasive vs. native shrubs, powered by citizen scientists. [Check out the results summary here](#).



Non-Native Plants Leading to Insect Declines

Displacement of native plants proving to be a key cause in insect population collapse. [Check out the full article here](#).



Volunteer Spotlight

Network Volunteer Receives Recognition

Warren King receives the Sally Laughlin Endangered Species Award from the Agency of Natural Resources. Warren, who is one of our Forest Hero! volunteers, received the award this November, for a lifetime dedicated to conservation in Vermont. Congratulations, Warren! [Check out the full story here](#).

Volunteer in the News

The ever busy Shrewsbury Conservation Commission saw the culmination of a huge project this year, with the opening of VT's 100th Wildlife Management Area, and Forest Hero! volunteer, Louise Duda was at the helm! Congratulations, Weezy! [Check out the full story here](#).



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