

Finding the right volunteers for your particular project

Type of activity & skills needed	Where to find the volunteers
<p>Management or planting events: Large community events can be effective for removing dense populations of invasive plants from sites that don't have species/features (such as vernal pools) that could be easily damaged by large groups. One-time events can require significant up-front planning and coordination. Smaller groups can return to remove any plants missed by volunteers and to control plants which have re-sprouted.</p> <p>Skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ability to work with other people. Caution and care when using tools and working around native plants ■ Basic plant identification ■ Ability to follow directions ■ Basic physical fitness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Youth groups: school groups, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4H. ■ Service groups: Rotary, Lions, AmeriCorps, church and religious groups like the Knights of Columbus, Vermont Youth Conservation Corps. ■ Outdoor clubs: Green Mountain Club or other local hiking clubs, Trout Unlimited and Ruffed Grouse Society chapters, ATV and snowmobile clubs. ■ Students: Check with local colleges and high schools for volunteer programs. The UVM LANDS and UVM Service TREK programs are examples in the Burlington area. High school students often have to perform a certain number of community service hours in order to graduate. ■ Corporate volunteers: Green Mountain Coffee Roasters and IBM are two Vermont businesses that encourage staff members to conduct volunteer work in their community. Check with businesses in your region to see if they provide opportunities for employee volunteerism. The United Way of Chittenden County Volunteer Center works with local businesses to organize "Days of Caring" for their employees, typically in the fall and spring. Contact 802-860-1677 or volctr@unitedwaycc.org for more information.

<p>Regular supervised work days: Regular volunteer work days that occur monthly during the field season can be appropriate for the long-term maintenance and control of invasives in an area. This type of project will benefit from repeat and increasingly skilled volunteers. Also requires a sustained commitment from at least one project member to organize and potentially oversee work days.</p> <p>Skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Same as for one-time events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Retired people, especially those who have an interest in ecology, hiking, fishing or birding. Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Chittenden County is an excellent resource. (www.unitedwaycc.org/rsvp) ■ Outdoor clubs: Green Mountain Club or other local hiking clubs, Trout Unlimited chapters, Ruffed Grouse Society chapters, ATV and snowmobile clubs. ■ People who work from home may have the flexibility to take a few hours out of their day on a regular basis. ■ Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (see text box p.37)
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<p>Long-term, unsupervised projects: Volunteers who are trained and certified to monitor and remove invasive plants and observe areas for Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) species in a designated area can do so without the supervision of project leaders. This approach involves the greatest amount of investment in volunteer training and management, and is well suited to large project areas. See Case Study 4 for an example of this model.</p> <p>Skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plant ID and removal skills ■ Interest in long-term stewardship ■ Potential use of GPS units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Seniors and retirees. ■ Master Gardeners and SOUL volunteers know plants, like to be outside, and are required to do a certain number of volunteer hours per year. http://www.uvm.edu/mastergardener/ <p>http://www.uvm.edu/extension/environment/?Page=landscape.html</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Americorps Alums (see text box p.37)
<p>Outreach and education: Many volunteers enjoy staffing tables at farmers' markets and other events, giving workshops, designing and putting up posters, and other outreach activities.</p> <p>Skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A working knowledge of the invasive plant issue ■ Strong interpersonal skills ■ Graphic design skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Master Gardeners ■ Local educators ■ Conservation commission members

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For more information, go to www.vtinvasives.org.