

Invasive Plants on the Upper Falls Greenway

The Greenway is threatened by several invasive plants that grow and spread rapidly, crowding and smothering native plants and damaging the ecosystem for native plants and animals from birds to butterflies. You can help local environmental groups like the Newton Conservators keep them in check with periodic volunteer invasives removal days (www.newtonconservators.org). Four of the most common and harmful are:

Oriental Bittersweet (top L): strangles and smothers; best handled by cutting vines near ground in Nov-Mar when less poison ivy risk.

Garlic Mustard (top R): crowds out other plants and poisons soil to prevent competition, pull with roots Apr-June before seeds spread.

Black Swallow-wort (bottom L): crowds and smothers; kills Monarch butterfly eggs when mistaken for milkweed. Pull w/ rhizome roots, if possible, before seed pods open.

Japanese Knotweed (bottom R): crowds and smothers; very aggressive. Spreads through roots but repeated stalk cutting helps.



For more information, see Mass Audubon's invasive plant pages: <https://www.massaudubon.org/learn/nature-wildlife/invasive-plants>