**CIPWG Symposium Planning Committee Meeting Minutes**

**January 6, 2022**

**Zoom**

Present: Susan Barney, Frank Belknap, Lisa Brodlie, Cheryl Cappiali, Donna Ellis, Rose Hiskes, Holly Kocet, Dave Laiuppa, Kathleen Nelson, Pete Picone, Charlotte Pyle, Anne Rowlands, Barbara Thomas, Emmett Varricchio, Vicki Wallace, Sophie Zyla

Rose opened the meeting at 10 am

Introductions were made and welcomes were extended to our 5 new committee members: Susan Barney, Cheryl Cappiali, Kathleen Nelson (returning), Barbara Thomas, and Sophie Zyla. Please see back pages for bios.

1. **Symposium format decision**

We agree that a virtual symposium is the safer bet, plus it will help us reach a broader audience and draw from a wider pool of speakers.

* 1. Virtual symposium: What would we change from last time?
     1. Format is about the same with 6 breakout rooms. We’d like to incorporate breakout rooms built into the schedule, but those rooms may need to be moderated. The rooms could be themed. We’d also like to arrange for in-person field trips/meet ups before an/or after the symposium around the state to give people a chance to meet. Preferred dates are now in late October (not the 26th). We’ll probably repeat the 2020 formula of 90% pre-recorded with a live into and Q+A. Note to look at the evaluations from 2020 when planning 2022.
     2. Vendor: Vicki will reach out to Juliet about the list of vendors (there are now more than just Total Webcasting)
     3. Review run of show for 2020 at upcoming meeting.
     4. 2020 Videos- discussion: Everyone’s glad to be able to still access the 2020 symposium. Anyone who paid can still view it. Can Total Webcasting remove the login so anyone can view?

Can we get a YouTube channel and get the videos on there? Would need permission from speakers. Pete would like the whole symposium available to Envirothon contestants.

There are space constraints when hosting videos on our website, so YouTube would be a better solution. Vicki will check into the YouTube channel

1. **Theme**: we discussed the following possibilities:
   1. Native plant communities at risk from invasive species: strategies for management
   2. Strategies for managing invasive plants: Assessment, management, and replacement
   3. Strategies for management: Native plant communities at risk from Invasives
   4. Native Ecosystems as risk from invasive plants: assessing, managing, and resilience
   5. Natives Ecosystems vs Invasive Plants: …
   6. Use native plants in title?
   7. Use community vs ecosystem?

Generally we agreed that settling on a broad theme is best for the broad audience we attract. Don’t make the theme too tight. Theme will be finalized at a later date.

1. **Speakers/Topics** (6 breakouts, 2-3 speakers in each, keynote, morning session (1-4))

Possibilities include:

1. The Agency world- what’s the common thread? Panel discussion
2. Land trusts, trail maintenance; most org’s don’t have science officers on their team
3. Changing zoning regulations to require native plantings. Newtown/Monroe- towns planting native Newtown-commercial properties require native plants
4. Allowing stiltgrass and garlic mustard to grow out
5. For Public works employees: a separate virtual program to follow up, perhaps at lunchtime on another day.
6. School properties: what maintenance staff should and should not plant.
7. How are we getting these invasive plants? Public works moving materials, towns planting invasives, electric companies cutting down trees. What does “good” look like in the agency world?
8. Management fact or fiction- doable vs not. Idealism vs. realism. Prioritizing order of management.
9. Developing management plans- Charlie Stebbins (Anne recommended). Could go under fact vs fiction above
10. Aquatics
11. Invasive coordinator.
12. Chemical and non-chemical methods– Always popular. New methods? Stem injections in knotweed will quickly exceed the label requirements (over 150 stems).
13. Research/early detection list
14. Educating public on real importance of getting management going on time. Knowing the biology of a plant to manage it. Life cycles. Reminder of most problematic plants.
15. New invasives
16. Potentially invasive
17. Natives- native ecotypes vs. New England
18. What doesn’t work?
19. Chris Mangels, Bill Moorhead- rare natives
20. How do we reach the public?
21. Education morning session, these resources are available (short session)
22. Biology and why it matters- how the lifecyle effects, no your enemy
23. Do this not that.

Keynote- We need a good “graduation” speaker. About 1 hr. We aren’t limited by speaker’s location with virtual symposium – can go national. Names included Bernd Blossey, Doug Tallamy (wonderful but he’s pretty overused right now).

We could include other groups in the invitation

Virtual field trips should be explored, a la Bryan Connolly in 2020. Judy Preston a possibility. Pete will do a virtual field trip.

Pete

Tasks so far:

Lisa- sponsors- (need another helper)

Vicky- coordination with university, pesticide credits, CEU (with Donna and Anne)

Rose- Plant ID (in person), Bryan Connelly- plant ID

Frank- Les Mehrhoff award (Committee- Rose, plaque –Pete)

Charlotte- Coordinate handouts,

Booklet- Anne, Lindsay, Kathleen

Todd- talk, moderator

Grace- posters

Dave- moderator

Josh- fill floater

Anne- Closing remarks

Event day volunteer (in person)

Next Meeting:

Feb 3 1-3 pm

**New Committee Member Bios**

I asked our newest members to tell us what brings them to CIPWG. Below are their answers, both long and short, lightly edited, in the order in which they were received. We have a really great group here!

**Cheryl Cappiali**

A lover of the natural world. Through study and observation she is continually learning the secrets of how living things interact. Particularly intriguing are the insects and their relationships with native species of trees, shrubs, and plants.

Member of The Nature Conservancy, Natural Resources Defense Council, Union of Concerned Scientists, Environmental Defense Fund, CT Audubon, and National Audubon Society. Through many courses, workshops, and boots-on-the-ground work she has developed a pathway to share her knowledge.

Organizations: Milford Land Conservation Trust (Treasurer), Milford Conservation Commission Board, Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut (Gardening Council Chair), Milford Garden Club, Connecticut Horticultural Society, Connecticut Master Gardeners Association , South West Conservation District Board (Secretary), Connecticut Invasive Plants Working Group (new member), National Association of Conservation Districts Board (CT Alt. Rep), CT Council on Soil and Water Conservation Board, Friends of Milford Library, Milford Arts Council, Friends of the Milford Cemetery, CT NOFA, NOFA Certified Organic Land Care Professional, CT Audubon Milford Coastal Center Board, Milford Tree Commission Advisor, Experiment Station Associates (President).

Awards: Conservation Award from the City of Milford for her work and dedication in maintaining the Rain Garden’s Native Plantings at the Parsons Government Center, for working with the Girl Scouts to plant and maintain native species gardens at Parsons Center, City Hall, and Wilcox Park.

Conservation Award from the Milford Garden Club for promoting goodwill in the community through her volunteer service projects around Milford.

2017 UConn Advanced Master Gardener (Bartlett Arboretum, Stamford, CT). Mentors UConn Master Gardener Interns every year. She’s listed four MG Outreach Project sites in Milford where MGs and Interns volunteer to remove invasive plants, vines, shrubs, and trees and maintain the native plants.

Certified through UMass on Invasive Plant Management, currently studying the invasive Jumping Worm issue.

When not knee deep in plant material, she’s reading about it (along with insects, soil, invasive plants and pests), or gathering and sorting seeds. She is an NGC Accredited Flower Show Judge who does her best to disqualify designer’s attempts to enter invasive plant material in their entries, and occasionally finds time to maintain her jeweler’s skills.

**Susan Barney**

What brings me to CIPWG is a motivation to learn about invasive species.

* identification of invasive plants (not just looking at a photo)
* early detection
* how to identify native plant communities amidst/nearby invasive plants and work to protect and encourage the native species
* what natives are close to invasive species (i.e. how to not mistake a native for an invasive)
* management of invasive species once identified
* assigning tasks in an invasive species work session
* develop a strategy for managing invasive species on a 13+ acre property that FRWA owns in New Hartford along the Farmington River

I am a long-time resident of the Farmington Valley and have been active in local organizations including the Farmington River Watershed Association, Renbrook School, and the Garden Club of Hartford. Member of the Farmington Land Trust and Wintonbury Land Trust, and was a planning/environmental analyst at the CT Department of Environmental Protection in the 1970's.

**Kathleen Nelson**

I am a biologist, gardener, former teacher, and former owner of a small nursery. My awareness of invasives began in 1988 and continues still while walking properties up for development as a member of the New Milford Inland Wetland Commission. With help from Betsy Corrigan, Mad Gardeners, and many local organizations, I organized and managed a Mile-a-Minute Vine control project from 2007-2013 with a small group of college student interns pulling pretty much all the MAM on over 100 properties each summer mostly in New Milford, Bridgewater, and Roxbury. I continue to work on MAM on a couple of land trust properties with the help of volunteers. I started a small project providing invasive plant education to the crew of the New Milford Public Works Department in 2020 and last summer I wrote New Milford’s Sustainable Connecticut Invasives section.

**Barb Thomas**

Advanced Master Gardener (certified in 2010), Monroe Conservation Commission Chairperson, Aspetuck Land Trust Board Member, Monroe Pollinator Pathway coordinator. For the past 4 summers, I've worked for Monroe Parks & Rec as the town gardener. I maintain the existing gardens and create new gardens at municipal buildings, town parks, and several other locations. I'm a big proponent of native plants. This year I'd like to work towards educating people on invasive plants and work with Monroe on an invasive management plan. Previously I worked in human resources for large corporations but that was not nearly as interesting or fun as what I'm doing now.

**Sophie Zyla**

My first CIPWG symposium was in 2008 and I really enjoyed all the knowledgeable speakers and learning opportunities the event offered. I was so impressed that I attended all but the 2020 symposium. I had also begun to reinvent myself and returned to school starting with an Outdoor Leadership Program before switching to an environmental education focused B.S. and a journalism certificate graduating in 2010, and conservation biology focused M.S. graduating in 2014. Between 2010 and 2021 I had been involved with bird banding, Piping Plover and shorebird monitoring, raptor and wildlife rescue, and other assorted bird related volunteer projects with Audubon CT, Manomet, DEEP, Great Gull Island, and A Place Called Hope.

Prior positions and organizations during those years included being a V.P. of Naugatuck Valley Audubon Society (NVAS), a seat on the Board of Directors of Audubon CT, and the Beacon Falls Conservation Commission (BFCC). While with NVAS I developed a Young Naturalist Program, led educational field trips for all ages, obtained grants for rebuilding and installation of bluebird houses, building Barn Owl houses, a Purple Martin condo, fishing line recycle bins, and native plant gardening. While at BFCC I had did some work with invasive plant removal and installation of a native plant garden in a town park.

Since 2018 I have been a Native Plant Trust volunteer involved in rare plant surveys and seed collections. While I have given up many involvements, I have also continued with the Christmas Bird Count and Winter Eagle Surveys. I am a conservation photographer and have had a number of educational photography exhibits at a variety of venues between 2016 and 2021.

My present ongoing passions and interests are habitat loss from invasive species and habitat restoration in order to support native species of plants, birds, insects, and other wildlife. Of course, birding and conservation photography are high on my list. I am thrilled to being part of this CIPWG committee.

**Holly Kocet**

Protect Our Pollinators, Co-founder and current president. POP is a nonprofit organization devoted to public education and to conservation of pollinators and their habitats. POP is the Pollinator Pathway organizer in Newtown. Along with members, I maintain several pollinator gardens, host events, and make presentations to garden clubs, libraries and schools.

Newtown Conservation Commission Chair, member 2018 – Present. In collaboration with Monroe Conservation Commission chair Barbara Thomas, I am spearheading an initiative to encourage other CT towns to adopt policy/regulations for Native Plants.

Pollinator Pathway Northeast, member Steering Committee and resource for information/questions on pollinators, native plants and invasive species.CT Native Plant and Pollinator Working Group, member

UConn Advanced Master Gardener 2013, MG since 2011.

Earth Tones Native Plant Nursery, Woodbury. Nursery worker 2015 to 2021. Working with native plants nurtured my respect for the complex and essential relationships between plants and native pollinators and beneficial insects.

The Garden Club of Newtown, former president, current civic co-chair.

Federated Garden Clubs of CT, former President’s Theme Project chair: “Plant America – Be a Conservation Champion”.

Notes from Anne Rowlands