



Partnership for the Delaware Estuary's Perennial Pages

A Seasonal Newsletter for Native Habitat Owners and Caretakers

January 2019



Connecting people, science, and nature for a healthy Delaware River and Bay



Rain Garden at Wilmington Friends School, Wilmington, DE Photo: Sarah Bouboulis

Our First Newsletter!

Welcome! Thank you for your interest in native habitats and their yearly maintenance needs. This newsletter is intended for owners and caretakers of native habitats installed in conjunction with The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary. However, feel free to share this newsletter with anyone you may know that is interested in cultivating and maintaining native habitats. Our intention is to produce the newsletter seasonally in order to highlight when certain maintenance activities are needed and appropriate. The overarching goal of *Perennial Pages* is to provide information to readers about the maintenance needs of their habitats, but also to act as a simple reminder to make time for the maintenance your habitat requires. Recurring topics in the newsletter will include:

- Time for Action--Seasonal Maintenance Activities

- What's "Up"?--Seasonal Plant identification
- Space Invaders--Invasive Species Spotlight



Photo: Shaun Bailey

Meet the Editor

Hi, I'm Sarah Bouboulis, Habitat Project Specialist and newsletter editor.

I've worked for PDE for since 2015 and have 5+ years of experience working in habitat restoration and environmental sciences. If you have any questions about your habitat or its maintenance needs, please don't hesitate to reach out. I can be reached by email at sbouboulis@delawareestuary.org or by phone at 302-655-4990.



Winter on the Brandywine River. Photo: Virginia Vassolotti

Time for Action: Starting Simple

This first newsletter is coming to you in winter, which means limited maintenance! However, there

are always things you can do now to try to be prepared for the busy growing season ahead. No need to go out in the snow, but near the end of winter, when things start to thaw, you can give your habitat a bit of a head start.

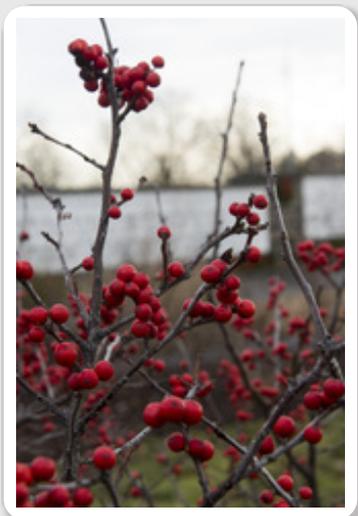
- Remove debris and broken branches left by storms
- Late winter can be a great time for pruning shrubs (when plants are still dormant)
- Book it! Plan out and schedule time for planting, mulching, and other maintenance in the spring
- Winter can be a good time to control invasive species (see Space Invaders section below).

If you have a rain garden, you can often get a better handle on water flow through the garden by watching and listening to the snow melt. The melt water flows a little slower, but can often provide some useful information about the functioning of the garden without having to stand outside in a spring storm.

What's "Up"?

Seasonal Plant

Identification



Winterberry Photo: Rachel Larue

Winterberry, or *Ilex verticillata*, is one of the most showy of winter shrubs. The bright red berries are sure to bring a great contrast to the dreary winter days. These shrubs provide an important food source for birds throughout the winter, but is also great for pollinators throughout the year. Learn more about Winterberry [here](#).

Space Invaders

Invasive Species Spotlight



Dame's Rocket Rosette. Photo: G.D. Bebeau

At this time of year many invasive plants are easier to pull, and by pulling the dormant plants now you may be able make space and find next years growth sooner by reducing crowding. A few invasives like English ivy, garlic mustard, and dame's rocket remain green all year and can be more visible at this time of year, so look out for them, and pull them up! **Dame's Rocket** is frequently found in garden's and can be mistaken for a native, look for the evergreen rosettes now to make room for actual natives in the spring. Learn more about Dame's Rocket [here](#).

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