



Connecticut Department of  
**ENERGY &  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION**

For Information Contact:

Dennis Schain, (860) 424-4100  
Nancy Murray, (860) 424-3589  
September 30, 2011

P R E S S                      R E L E A S E

## **STATE ASKS PUBLIC TO REPORT SIGHTINGS OF INVASIVE MILE-A-MINUTE VINE AS CONTROL EFFORTS CONTINUE**

Scientists and staff at the University of Connecticut (UConn) and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) are continuing their collaborative efforts to control mile-a-minute vine (*Persicaria perfoliata*) and remind the public to remain on the lookout for this plant. Mile-a-minute vine is a highly invasive annual plant from eastern Asia that can quickly outcompete and replace native vegetation, damaging habitat for native plants and animals.

“Invasive plants are a significant threat to Connecticut’s natural resources, and mile-a-minute is potentially one of the worst. Early detection and rapid response are essential if we are to keep these invaders at bay,” said Bill Hyatt, chief of DEEP’s Bureau of Natural Resources.

Earlier this month, UConn and DEEP biologists confirmed the presence of mile-a-minute vine at a location in Bristol, a city where these plants had not previously been reported.

“The public is our best source of reports about this invasive plant, and as we approach the end of the growing season, these plants become especially visible in parks, forests and yards. The early fall is the ideal time to find and report these problem plants,” said Logan Senack, Connecticut Invasive Plant Coordinator.

“If you find mile-a-minute, especially if it is growing on your own property, make sure to report it before pulling it up”, adds Donna Ellis, Senior Extension Educator at UConn. “We may need to collect additional information about the plants before they are removed.”

Mile-a-minute was first found in Connecticut in Fairfield County in 1997. Since then, it has spread to 20 Connecticut towns, as far east as Stonington and as far north as Simsbury. Mile-a-minute spreads by seed and quickly grows into dense stands that can cover and outcompete native vegetation.

During this past summer, UConn and DEEP scientists coordinated removal efforts in the town of Sprague, hosting several invasive plant control activities for mile-a-minute along the Shetucket River. In addition, scientists from UConn and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station are attempting to reduce the abundance of mile-a-minute at a number of sites by releasing insects that feed exclusively on the plant.

Visit [www.hort.uconn.edu/mam](http://www.hort.uconn.edu/mam) for additional identification tips, photographs and control information. You can also contact Logan Senack ([logan.senack@uconn.edu](mailto:logan.senack@uconn.edu)) or Donna Ellis (860-486-6448; [donna.ellis@uconn.edu](mailto:donna.ellis@uconn.edu)) for additional information. To report a suspected mile-a-minute invasion, visit the above website or contact Donna Ellis at UConn at 860-486-6448.

#### **Identifying mile-a-minute**

Mile-a-minute vine has three identifying traits that help distinguish it from other similar species found in the state. All three traits must occur on the same plant. The traits are: (1) triangular leaves with three sides and no lobes; (2) small but sharp barbs that curve down along the stem; and (3) small saucer-shaped leaves found at branching points along the stem.



*A mile-a-minute vine growing in Bridgewater, photo provided by Donna Ellis.*

#####