



# The Door County Invasive Species Team

*Empowering Door County citizens and municipalities with the information, tools, and skills to tackle invasive species.*

## Door County Invasive Species News



The 2024 field season presented its share of challenges. With staffing changes at the outset, an exceptionally wet spring, and funding constraints, we faced significant obstacles. Despite these hurdles, the DCIST team persevered, making substantial progress in controlling invasive species across Door County.

Phragmites control remains one of our most popular offerings. This season, we treated 133 acres. While this is fewer acres than in past years, our consistent treatments continue to yield positive results. Through our inventory efforts, we identified 16.75 acres of phragmites that were successfully treated in 2024, in addition to the 14.75 acres treated in 2023. Although many populations now lack living stems, we will maintain vigilant monitoring to detect any potential resurgence.

Knotweed is another persistent invasive species. This year, we treated 7.4 acres. Initial treatments effectively reduce population size and density, but due to extensive root systems, low-density populations can persist for several years. Over the past three years, consistent treatment has significantly reduced density, with 1 acre of knotweed now devoid of living stems.

DCIST, in partnership with the DNR, TNC, The Ridges, UWGB, and the DCLT, is undertaking a comprehensive woody invasive species inventory on State Natural Area lands in Door County. In 2024, we inventoried 12 sites, covering over 2,000 acres, and documented 246 acres of woody invasive species. To enhance public awareness, we plan to offer a winter tree identification workshop, focusing on identifying trees and shrubs without leaves, including both non-native and native species.

DCIST's work is primarily grant-funded and offered at no cost to Door County property owners. However, grant competition makes funding uncertain. As the year draws to a close, we kindly request your support through a donation to help sustain our programs and initiatives. Our donation form can be found here on our [website](https://doorinvasives.org).

## Native Species Highlights

### Wisconsin Native Flower Species – Winter Interest

Door County is home to many beautiful native plants that not only provide stunning visuals but also support a healthy ecosystem for pollinators and wildlife. The plants below are only a sliver of the species Door County has to offer. While you are outside enjoying summer in Door County, help halt invasive species by reporting any populations on the GLEDN app and landscape with native species!

**Virgin's Bower** (*Clematis virginiana*): is a vigorous, native climbing vine that thrives in a variety of Wisconsin habitats, including woodland edges, streambanks, and fence lines. It features clusters of small, fragrant white flowers in late summer, which give way to silky, feathery seed heads that add visual interest through fall and winter. This adaptable vine is excellent for covering trellises or naturalizing in wild gardens, supporting pollinators with its blooms and birds with its seeds.



Photo courtesy of David Stephens,  
Bugwood.org.



Photo courtesy of Peter Dziuk,  
Minnesota Wildflowers

**Red-osier Dogwood** (*Cornus sericea*): is a versatile shrub prized for its vibrant red stems that provide striking winter color, especially against snow. It can thrive in various habitats and produces clusters of small white flowers in spring followed by white berries that attract birds. This hardy shrub is excellent for erosion control, wildlife habitat, and adding year-round interest to naturalized landscapes.

**Spotted beebalm** (*Monarda punctata*): is known for its unique, tiered flower clusters with pale, purple-spotted blooms surrounded by colorful bracts, often pink or lavender. It thrives in sunny, well-drained habitats like prairies and sandy soils, attracting bees, butterflies, and other pollinators with its aromatic foliage and nectar-rich flowers. This drought-tolerant plant is a great choice for adding texture, color, and wildlife value



to native gardens or pollinator-friendly landscapes.

Winter photo courtesy of Jean  
Potuchek



Photo courtesy of Peter Dziuk,  
Minnesota Wildflowers

DCIST relies on volunteers to help collect data on where invasive plants and animals are found in Door County.

If you're interested in helping, DCIST can provide training on the use of handheld GPS units or you can also use the GLEDN app to report findings via your smartphone. Contact DCIST at [dcist1@gmail.com](mailto:dcist1@gmail.com) for more information or learn how to download and use the app at <https://fyi.uwex.edu/wifdn/>.

Keep an eye out for our next newsletter and keep up to date on our DCIST website at <https://doorinvasives.org>. We will be posting any and all additional training opportunities & educational materials as we receive them.



## Invasive Species Workshops, News, and Volunteer Opportunities



Don't let the winter blues keep you indoors! Embrace the season and discover the beauty of winter at Crossroads at Big Creek. From guided hikes through snowy trails to engaging workshops and community events, there's something for everyone to enjoy. Check out our events calendar and make this winter one to remember with activities that inspire, educate, and connect you with nature and others.

To see all the events, check out Crossroad's [Event Calendar](#).

### First Day Hike

**Date:** January 1, 2025, 10:00 am

**Location:** White Cedar Nature Center at Peninsula State Park

The Friends of Peninsula State Park will host their annual First Day Hike, January 1, 2025, at Peninsula State Park. Meet at the White Cedar Nature Center at 10:00am. The guided hike will last about 30-45 minutes. There will also be an outdoor warming fire, hot beverages and cookies available after the hike.

Come Join Us for our New Year tradition!!



### Winter Guided Hikes

**Dates:** Various

As winter blankets the landscape in a serene layer of snow, there's no better time to experience nature's quiet beauty than with a guided hike. These winter adventures offer expert insights into how local wildlife adapts to the cold, the unique features of dormant plants, and the historical significance of the area under winter's spell. Whether you're an experienced explorer or new to hiking, a guided winter hike is a magical way to connect with nature, breathe in crisp air, and create lasting memories amidst the season's tranquility.

To find more information and register, visit [The Ridges](#).





# Fish Tales

## LECTURE SERIES

Presenting the Science of Great Lakes Fisheries

**Crossroads at Big Creek**  
LEARNING CENTER NATURE PRESERVE  
2041 Michigan Street, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 7 PM**

**Opportunities and Challenges of Restoring Native Prey Fishes to the Great Lakes**

**Dr. David "Bo" Bunnel**  
Research Fisheries Biologist  
Great Lakes Science Center  
United States Geological Service  
Ann Arbor, Michigan



**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 7 PM**

**Status of Lake Whitefish in Lake Michigan and Green Bay**

**Scott Hansen**  
Senior Fisheries Biologist  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Sturgeon Bay Service Center



**THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 7 PM**

**Fisheries of the Menominee Nation**

**Jeremy Pyatskowitz**  
Director - Environmental Services Department  
Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin



**THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 7 PM**

**Secrets of Lake Michigan Salmon & Trout: Survival, Movement, and Reproduction Revealed Through Mass Marking**

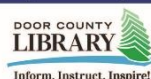
**Dr. Matthew Kornis**  
Fisheries Biologist  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Green Bay Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office



**Presentations In-Person at Crossroads at Big Creek in 2025 or via Zoom**

To participate via ZOOM or Facebook Live, go to <https://doorcountylibrary.org/event> on the date of each talk, to find the link.

Fish Tales is an educational outreach of Crossroads at Big Creek offered in partnership with the Door County Library.



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Check out our website at <https://doorinvasives.org>



## Seeing Stars?

### Invasive Species Profile: Starry stonewort (*Nitellopsis obtuse*) An invader of Door County

Starry stonewort (*Nitellopsis obtuse*), native to Europe and Asia, is a submerged aquatic macrophyte (algae) known for growing in dense mats. A relatively new invader, it was first found in the Great Lakes in 1983 and starting in 2006 starry stonewort rapidly expanded across inland lakes in Michigan. In many infested lakes, this alga impedes navigation, limits growth of beneficial plants, and covers valuable fish habitat and spawning areas. Inland lakes infested with starry stonewort often develop very clear water as it prevents the re-suspension of particulate matter in the water column. Starry stonewort was first recorded in Door County in 2016 in Lake Michigan. No populations of starry stonewort have been documented in any of Door County's inland lakes.

Starry stonewort is similar in appearance to a native species known as *Chara*. It has tiny, star-shaped, tan-colored reproductive structures called "bulbils" that are firm to the touch when compared to its soft branches. The presence of bulbils is one way to distinguish between starry stonewort from *Chara*. Starry stonewort has whorls (leaves that encircle the stem) of 4-6 long branchlets, with blunt tips. It is more robust than most members of its family and can grow to over 6.5 feet tall. Starry stonewort's branches look and feel gelatinous, unlike *Chara*, which feels brittle and scaly. It typically grows in alkaline lakes with marl sediments, up to 30 feet deep.

Starry stonewort is typically an annual but can behave as a perennial during mild winters. Because it lacks roots, it can be dislodged from the bottom without much difficulty. However, manual removal of starry stonewort is difficult and probably impractical on a large scale. Abundant bulbils on the rhizoids can dislodge if disturbed and will sprout new individuals. Starry stonewort can also regrow from pieces of plants that are chopped off but not harvested. Manual removal efforts must emphasize careful removal of these bulbils and plant parts. Chemical treatments have been used with mixed success but could also pose problems for other aquatic life. To prevent the spread of starry stonewort from Lake Michigan to inland lakes make sure to **INSPECT** your boat, trailer and equipment, **REMOVE** any attached aquatic plants or animals, **DRAIN** all water from boats, motors and all equipment, and **NEVER MOVE** live fish away from a waterbody. For more information on starry stonewort please visit:

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Invasives/fact/StarryStonewort.html>



Photo of a "bulbil" found at the Sister Bay



Photo of a mat of starry stonewort. Photo courtesy of MN DNR.



Photo of an underwater mat of starry stonewort. Photo courtesy of Paul Skawinski.